LALA LAJPAT RAI
WRITINGS AND SPEECHES
VOLUME TWO

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1920-1928

EDITED BY

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PREFACE

IN THE pages of this volume are incorporated selections from the writings and speeches of Lala Lajpat Rai for the last nine years of his life. The volume begins with the first address he delivered in India on landing at Bombay after a voluntary 'exile' of nearly six years ; it ends with the speech of Lajpat Rai as President of the Agra Hindu Conference held at Etawah on 27 October 1928. During this interval India witnessed political activity on an unprecedented scale. Among the Indian leaders who played a conspicuous role in the political regeneration of the country and the struggle for independence during the twenties, Lalaji occupied a pre-eminent place. After the Nagpur Congress he became one of the chief lieutenants of Mahatma Gandhi in the Non-co-operation movement and suffered a term of imprisonment for practising what he preached. On his release he extended his support to the Swaraj Party and later himself entered the Central Legislative Assembly in January 1926. On the Hindu-Muslim question he adopted an independent stand, different from the Congress policy, and joined the Hindu Mahasabha to help the movement for unifying and solidifying the Hindu community. He broke away from the Swaraj Party in August 1926 because he could not mould its policies according to his own ideas, and fought the 1926 general elections to Councils under the auspices of the Independent Congress Party. He was one of the active Members of the Central Assembly from 1926 to 1928. In the last year of his life he led the movement against the Simon Commission.

Despite this hectic political activity and participation in various movements, Lajpat Rai continued to write for the press. His didactic impulse was irrepressible and even from his prison cell came several thought provoking contributions. The solitude in jail indeed afforded him time to reflect and put out some of his best writings on the political problem of India. When free he studied the various questions as an independent publicist and gave expression to his views with courage and frankness. The selections in this volume reflect Lajpat Rai's ideas on different aspects of the

Indian situation during this period. They also constitute an attempt by one of the most eminent political figures to analyse logically the different facets of the problem of India and present his conclusions in a lucid and clear manner.

It will be superfluous to add that it has not been possible to include in this volume all that was written by Lalaji during this period. The introduction given in volume one of this publication also covers this volume and may be considered as much a part of this as of the first one.

I like to take this opportunity of expressing again my gratitude to Sewak Raj Mahajan for his valuable assistance in the completion of this work.

V. C. Joshi

New Delhi,
March 4, 1966

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1. TOWARDS FREEDOM

I CANNOT adequately thank you for the very affectionate and kind reception you have accorded me all this day. I cannot accept it as due to any of my merits, but as a manifestation of that great spirit which animates this country from one end to the other. I accept that manifestation as a great finger-print from the heavens that we are destined to become great and that this country of ours will once more rise in the scale of nations. As such I give the credit not to this man or that man but to the spirit in you, my friends. Why? India was like a sleeping lion. Once it wakes, it wakes with a momentum that carries the force of its ancient greatness. We have never been, in spite of many revolutions that we have undergone, a selfish people, we have never been an oppressive people. We have behind us the righteousness of scores of generations and hence though we may be fallen, though we may be downtrodden, though we may be weak, though we may be treated with humiliation, we have the potentialities to rise and be great once more. It is that potentiality that you are expressing, it is that potentiality which is finding its expression in this manifestation which I am seeing today.

This is not the time for me nor the occasion to give you my opinion of the present political situation in this country. I shall beg leave of you to give me time before I express myself on the subject. But there are some fundamental truths which I have learnt to my pleasure in my travels abroad which I am going to

This is the full text of the address delivered by Lala Lajpat Rai on 20 February 1920 at a crowded public meeting held at Shantaram Chaul, Bombay, to welcome him on his return to India that day. Mr. M. A. Jinnah presided and among those who welcomed Lajpat Rai were Mrs. Annie Besant and Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Paying his tribute, Mr. Jinnah described Lala Lajpat Rai as one of the greatest sons of India.

place before you as my message to "Young India". My friends I must tell you that henceforth we should recognise it as a fundamental doctrine that the unity of the Hindus and Mahommedans will be a great asset to our political future. In this unity we shall not be guided by the temporary benefit of this community or that. We shall not adopt it as a measure of political expediency. But we shall adopt it as a fundamental doctrine of our faith, to stick to, to our death-beds until we win our freedom. Not till then only, but thereafter too, we shall live in this country as brothers determined to work together, determined to resist together, and determined to win. That is one of the fundamental doctrines which we must adopt as a first article of our political faith.

Now to come to the second article. I must tell you, do not place any faith upon anybody but yourself. You can rise only by your own efforts. Remember "Nations are by themselves made". We shall welcome co-operation. We shall welcome advice. We shall welcome guidance also, in certain matters. But we shall resent patronage and dictation. We are not babies. We have behind us the grown wisdom of six thousand years at least, not to say more.

Then I may tell you I have travelled now practically all over the world and I have seen three of the great self-ruling nations of the world at least, the Japanese, the Americans and the Englishmen. And take it from me, that except perhaps in the requirements of modern knowledge, we are inferior to none on the face of the earth. I shall, if I have time, take you department by department and show to you that in no department of associated life, private life, are we inferior to any nation of world. What are we inferior in ? We have been inferior in the capacity to unite, we have been inferior to a certain extent in adaptation to the modern requirements, we have been inferior in learning the lesson of modern diplomacy. Therein lies our inferiority. If we had learnt the art of telling lies on a broad scale, if we had swept away all our past and had entered into the great arena of violence, if we had done all these things, which at the present moment represent Power in the world, we might have been considered by the great nations of the world as worthy of self-government. But we have been lacking in these qualities.

And there is one of these qualities which I want you to learn. We have been a righteous nation in all our history and we shall

continue to be righteous and to win on the basis of righteousness. I want you to be true to your civilization. Seek truth, speak truth and act truth and I promise you shall win. The modern world is being managed, modern politics are being based upon the rights of the superior and the inferior. We recognise no superior and no inferior. We don't want for our country anything that we are not prepared to concede to the other people of the globe. What we want is the position of equality and nothing else?

There are some friends of ours who are often tempted by the term Imperialism. They want to be partners in the great Imperial system. I don't want it. Ladies and gentlemen, there is no word coined by the genius of man, more vicious, more sinful, more criminal than Imperialism. And I may tell you that I for one don't want to be a partner in any Imperial system. All that I want for my country is a position of equality first in the British Commonwealth and then in the nations of the world.

With our connection with Great Britain, we want to co-operate with those British statesmen and politicians, thinkers and workers, who want to convert the British Empire into a British Commonwealth. And I may tell you that the world movements foreshadow coming events and unless the British Empire is soon converted into a British Commonwealth it will go to the dogs as other Empires have gone. The safety of the British Empire lies in converting it into a British Commonwealth and we as Indians, as constitutional workers, as Indians believing in the destiny of the whole world, we are prepared to co-operate constitutionally with the whole of our thinking force, with the whole of our character at the back of it to convert that Empire into a Commonwealth of equal and free nations. My dear friends, there are some people who tell us that the opinion of other people does not count for much. They tell us that the opinion of the British people who are the present rulers of this country naturally matters for our progress. I do not accept that dictum.

The League of Nations which is at present a humbug, has been established as a fact. It is a fact, and we are a Member of that League of Nations. We want to be a Member of the League with a vengeance. We want to be a living Member of the League of Nations and not a sleeping partner. Ladies and gentlemen, if we become a living Member of the League of Nations, we have to work

up the world poinion in our favour, and to show the world that the calumnies that are being circulated against us of our unfitness, of our divisions, of our weakness of character or all these things, that those calumnies are baseless and untrue. And how can we repudiate those calumnies unless by work in foreign countries in co-operation with those joyous world spirits which in every country are trying to raise the world into a humanity from the hell that it is at the present moment. We must co-operate, we must mix our voice with them, we must put our soul force with them side by side to enable them to push the world from the world of unrighteousness into the world of righteousness and equality for every human being, be he of any continent, or any colour, or of any caste, or of any creed. My friends, I beg of you, my young friends, I entreat you with all the earnestness that I can command and with all the love that I bear you, that this is a most critical time in the history of our nation, not only in the history of our nation, but in the history of humanity.

This is a turning point—humanity is taking a turning point. Shall we, or shall we not, take our legitimate part as one-fifth of the human race, as the descendants of the mighty ancient Aryans, as the followers of Mohammedan leaders, shall we or shall we not take our part in the making of the new world? And if we had to take our part in the making of the new world, we must make every effort to make a united stand, to make a truthful stand, to make a righteous stand, to make an unrelenting stand, come what may. The Western world powers have lately in the last war shown you an example. What for did they fight? They said they fought for democracy. They said they fought for the empire of the world. They said they fought for equal justice. Yet we know what they fought for. And if they won with all that they could die in millions, lose all their property, sacrifice their children, give up their women, why shall we not, when we stand for the cause of righteousness and truth only? There are people who speak from the mouth true words of great moment and when the occasion for action comes, they eat them up. Even the greatest men of the world have done that. We know what happened at Versailles, Paris.[1] We know how the world is now treated with peace of statesmanship.

My friends, do not aspire to be statesmen. Try to be honest men, try to be good men, and last but not least, try to be true to yourselves and to the country which gave you birth. We do not

want politicians, we will leave them to America. We will leave them to England. Let them settle their differences. We will even leave them to France, my friends, we will also leave them to Japan. We do not want politicians. We want honest, plain-speaking, truth-speaking men and women. That is all. And if we secure that, our salvation is very near. The difficulty is how to convince you of becoming plain-speaking truthful men. Now, I can tell you one thing. The world has been fighting for material goods. The world has been fighting for the control of capital. The world has been fighting for the control of land. The world has been fighting for the control of markets. The world has been fighting for the control of labour. Capital, wealth, labour, markets, where are they leading the world to ? Do you hear the cry from Europe ? —that nation is dying, that nation is starving, that nation has become bankrupt, that nation is selling its women, that nation is doing this and that nation is doing that. We have been starving for a hundred years. Thank God we have not done any of these things. Don't be carried away by false ideals.

All the capital of the world cannot save you, cannot bring you freedom. Let me tell you from my experience. We think that these countries are very free. You from here think that England and America and Japan and France are the freest countries on the face of the globe. Well in certain respects, they are. But in certain other respects, let me tell you, take it from me, that they are the most servile people on the face of the globe. Why ? Few amongst them can speak the truth. Few amongst them have the spirit of abnegation for higher causes. Where in the world shall we find another man equal in spirit, self-sacrifice and righteousness, equal to Mahatma Gandhi. We may or may not agree with his views. We may or may not follow him. But I challenge the whole world to produce another man like Mahatma Gandhi. Who has produced him ? Twentieth century India. He is not alone. I can name several other names whose equals you will not find in any other land. Gentlemen, I have tried my very best to take the most generous view, to take the most liberal view of the other nations, but let me tell you honestly, absolutely honestly, that in the power of self-abnegation, in the power of sacrifice for higher causes there is no other country on the face of the globe which can beat us, only if we direct that spirit of self-sacrifice and self-abnegation to rightful

purposes and rightful ends. That is the only thing that is wanted. We have been told here that our politics are corrupt, our politicians are divided ; Hindus and Mohammedans are constantly fighting with each other ; each caste is prepared to cut the throat of another caste. We have been flaunted with the picture of the depressed classes before us.

But let me tell you that this is all Imperial talk. Why ? The two great Imperial assets are : first to change the psychology of the people whom they want to govern and secondly, to change their own psychology. They want it to be believed that they are the choice of the world, and then want to believe that you are the refuse of the world. Therein lies the whole Imperial psychology. You have unfortunately for the 150 years been believing that you are really inferior to other people.

Rise up, Young India, you are inferior to none. In our common men, in the men who till our fields and produce our food, in those men who do not get sufficient to eat twice a day, you have a wealth which no other country on the face of the globe possess. There are souls ready to redeem them. Even though they will die, even though they will starve, they will never dare to steal one mouthful of food from the house of the rich. Where on earth is that character to be found ? If this state of things were to continue in any other country—I only admire the righteous phase of it—if in any other country the thing were to happen, you will find all the capitalists concealing themselves in the wine cellars to protect themselves and their property. This is actually happening in Europe at present. I, therefore, beg of you, young men of India, your motherland is at the present moment lying prostrate, because of your lack of faith in yourselves, in your people and in your country ; prostrate because of your weakness of mind and weakness of character. Raise up your minds, enthuse yourselves with the electricity of self-confidence and self-reliance. And this race will rise sphynx-like and spread all over the world. Remember one-fifth of the human race possessing the intelligence of you, possessing the arms of you, these arms (pointing to his arms) not swords and pistols—you must be careful in your language, you see. Now, our masters tell us that we are wanting in practical intellect. What is that practical intellect ? That subtlety which makes two and two appear five. Well I may tell you that is a dangerous game. If they goad us today like that,

who knows what young India may not do ? But at the same time I do not want you to make your intellect so subtle as that. I want you to be honest and say two and two make four.

I have told you two or three fundamental principles which I believe in. The unity of the Hindus and Mahommedans, the belief in yourselves—faith in yourselves, as I call self-faith—and the belief that you and you alone shall raise your country. Others can give you numbers. But they shall not give you soul. What we want is not the crumbs, but the soul? We want the soul of the body politic. And what is the soul of the body politic ? Perhaps I am treading on dangerous ground. The soul of the body politic is the power of the purse and the power to defend one's own country. Let me tell you that that man is insane who tells you not to take advantage of every opportunity that is offered to you for the service of your country in whatever direction it might lie handy. But let me tell them—they may take it from me that we shall never be contented unless we get self-government. Constant, unending, unrestrained, uncontrolled vigil, controlled only by self-discipline, controlled only by righteousness, is the price of liberty. Young men of India, are you prepared to pay that price ? Do you only say or do you mean it ? Well you shall have it. The moment you mean it, you shall get it. At present you only say "yes" half-heartedly. I wish you mean it. (Loud cries from the audience of "We do.") When you mean it you will get it.

I am returning to my country with full faith in the righteousness of my cause. I want you, my countrymen, to work in the open, with absolute frankness, discarding secret methods and all methods of violence. If we don't win by soul force, if we don't win by the force of will and determination of three hundred and fifty millions of human beings, we don't deserve to win it by violence. If one-fifth of humanity cannot win their liberty by the force of their will, by the power of their soul, by the power of their determination, they deserve to be swept off the face of the earth ; and no power on earth can save it. Why, think of your power ? Think of your potentiality. Think of the force in your hearts. We need not talk of violence, we need not talk of force. Only cowards do that, not the descendants of the ancient Kshatriyas and the descendants of ancient Mughals. One who is working in the open need not be afraid. I may tell you that the moment I change my opinion, I will give notice to the Government that I have done so. I will never do a thing

in the purdah. We want all women to come out from the purdah, and not the men to go into the purdah. No, Sir, that won't do for us. We shall not bring a slur upon the names of our forefathers. But subject to that qualification, subject to that reservation, there was nothing on earth which we shall leave undone to win our rights and to gain what is ours. We don't want anything which belongs to anybody else. We are prepared to give whenever anybody is in need and wants it in a spirit of proper co-operation. But we shall not give by force, we shall not give by dictation. We will rather not work, we will die in the fields, than let others exploit and take from us what we do not want to give. That is a lesson which I want Young India to lay at heart. My friends, we have talked much. We have talked a lot, we have talked a great deal. There are orators in India, at almost every corner of the streets of Bombay or Calcutta. There are men who in the flow of oratory want to be Imperial partners. There are men who are proud of things which ought to put them to shame. But there is an awakening.

There is a dawn of a new day, the dawn of a new spirit. The year 1919 shall be memorable in the history of India not for the Reform Act, but for Jallianwalla Bagh[2]. The Reforms we shall utilize to the fullest extent. We do not intend to boycott them; as I have told you it shall be vain to boycott them. We shall utilize every possible avenue, every possible opportunity left to us. To do otherwise would be unwise and insane. But at the same time the shrine in our hearts which shall live for ever in golden letters shall be Jallianwalla Bagh and not the Reforms. That is the shrine we shall worship and that is the shrine we shall offer flowers at, until that wrong is righted and righted in the right.

Ladies and gentlemen, as I told you in the beginning of my speech, I come to this country back after six years. I know that sometimes aspersions have been cast upon my work abroad. It is not my purpose to defend myself. I consider it to be beneath my dignity. No one has a right to ask me to give an account of my actions but my countrymen, and when the demand comes from them, I shall tell them everything. I shall conceal nothing because I have nothing to conceal. But, in the meantime I may tell you that not a single pie of any public fund or from any fund taken from any supporters, has been utilised by me for my personal use. I had plenty of money sent to me by my son, and I have lived a frugal life. I may tell you, it is

no secret—that I disdained to do no work, have cooked my food with my hands. I have cleaned my own room. I have at times gone with five cents of bread for the evening meal. Not that I had no money. There were thousands of public funds in my hands, but I would not spend one cent of it for myself. I say this not in vindication of my character because up to this time I have not heard a single countryman of mine questioning my character in that direction; and as I told you I owe no apology to anybody else. But I just want to give this piece of information. In my life from the beginning to the end I have been entrusted by you with numberless funds. I challenge my bitterest enemies to come forward and say that any action of mine has been affected by any considerations of money or property. I don't want to continue in this strain, it is painful and it is humiliating. But when a man is traduced unfairly, sometimes he has to speak a word of truth in his own defence.

One last piece of advice that I want to give you is this. Learn to do your work with your own hands. Do not depend upon servants. Do not depend upon property. Do not imitate other people. That will be extremely foolish and suicidal. The more you are free, the more you have the capacity of suffering, the more you have the ability to live a simple life, the more you will be free. Freedom comes from want of Independence. Freedom does not come by an Act of Parliament. Remember that. If you continue to depend for your means of livelihood, upon this department or that department, upon this Honourable or that Honourable, upon this Excellency or that Excellency, you shall always be slaves. But the moment you take the kurhad and go and cut the tree, the moment you take the broom and go and sweep your room without being tempted with offerings of money and service, you are free, free from all the bondages with which you have been afflicted so far. Learn to be free.

What is progress ? Progress is nothing but progress towards freedom. Your ancestors have taught to you the lesson that freedom is taken away the moment you have the feeling of dependence. Lessen your dependence at any rate, if you cannot give it up. Cultivate the habit of self-dependence, self-reliance, not in a spirit of aggression or offensiveness, but in a spirit of manliness, manliness, of which we have many examples in the history of India; and, my friends, I tell you, you will never require any speeches to emulate you. You will

never require any measures by any body to free you. Freedom must come from within. Freedom must come from within of the Mother of India. Freedom won't come from without. Freedom won't fall from the heavens. Freedom will rise Goddess-like from our earth; and we shall rise, and with our own hands we shall offer flowers and we shall worship her. I thank you once more.

2. ON NON-CO-OPERATION

MY PRESENT state of health forbids me entering into a long argument with you in reply to your criticism of my position in the matter of the Reformed Councils. I wish you had published a full translation of my article in which I had stated the reasons of my decision, as has been done by your contemporary the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of Calcutta. Your informant did not quite correctly represent my point of view, though I think he was substantially correct. I am, however, going to state my position in a few paragraphs.

I have always believed that there can be no co-operation between a foreign government and the leaders of a subject race. The co-operation of a 'conquered race' in the work of administering a 'conquered' country is practically an admission of the right of the conquerors to rule the conquered territory. Such an admission is very damaging to the psychology of the conquered race. A conquered race may not be in a position to refuse to co-operate altogether. There are certain departments of administration in which co-operation is unavoidable. There are certain other departments, however, where the idea of co-operation should be repugnant to the sense of self-respect of the leaders of the subject race. It is a duty of such leaders to keep the flame of liberty alive, by refusing to co-operate with the administration of the conquerors in such a way as to identify themselves with the administration. Consequently I have held all my life that the best brains and the best minds of the nation should not lend their co-operation to the Government by accepting its service, and that they should not serve on the legislatures of the country as long as there was a majority of foreigners in it and as long as they had not a determining voice in the legislation of the country.

Letter to the Editor *The Tribune*, dated 1 July 1920; published in the issue of 3 July 1920.

I have always been of opinion that the presence of Indian members in the Legislative Councils has done more harm to the country than good. Mr. Gokhale co-operated in passing the Press Act[1], Pandit Malaviya co-operated in passing the Defence of India Act,[2] the Nationalist members co-operated in sanctioning the gift of 100 million pounds towards the expenses of the Great War[3]. These and other similar measures, have in my opinion done greater harm to the country than the combined services of the Indian members of the Legislative Councils for the last twelve years. So far the Indian members have failed to influence the legislatures of the country in the fundamentals of Government policy. The finance and the military are the two pivots. of the Government. Under both heads the Indian members have egregiously failed to influence Government policy. Their co-operation has been more harmful than their absence from the Councils could have been. The attitude of the Government in the matter of the Rowlatt Act[4] shows what value Government has attached to their co-operation in spite of the pronouncement of August, 1917. The fact is that there can be no co-operation between the members of a nation who has no voice in the selection of the Government, and the latter. It is a part of statesmanship to clothe absolutism with the appearance of co-operation, but it is also part of true patriotism not to be misled by these appearances. In my judgment a member of a subject race who strengthens the hands of its absolute rulers, however pure his motive, is unconsciouly guilty of betraying his people. Under certain circumstances perhaps, it is unavoidable, for example where the subject is called upon to make a choice between two evils, *viz.*, the Government of the ruling race in power, and the Government of another race that threatens to supplant the former. That is one illustration, there may be others too. But when the leaders of a subject race start to co-operate voluntarily and willingly, in the maintenance of a system of government which denies them their fundamental rights as human beings, such leaders thereby lay themselves open to the charge of being untrue to the best interests of the country.

Such was my position up to the announcement of August 1917. The announcement brought a hopeful change in this attitude. I could honestly, without outraging my sense of patriotism offer co-operation in working out a scheme which promised complete freedom to my country at no distant date. For the first time in the history of the

British administration the people were given the right of administering certain departments of administration through popularly elected members and I thought here was a promise which it was the duty of every Indian patriot to utilise in the best interests of his country. I was not enthusiastic over the Reforms Act[5]. I could not be. I could not shut my eyes to its halting nature and its limitations, yet I resolved to honestly co-operate with the Government in the successful working out of the Reforms Scheme. I can never think of "co-operation with the object of non-co-operation". I never intended to co-operate with the object of defeating the Act. I believed that the Act gave us an opening and we should use it frankly and whole-heartedly. I was fully prepared for co-operation.

That was the frame of my mind until I began to feel that both the Government of India and the Secretary of State were engaged in undoing what had been done, or what had been promised by the Reforms Scheme. In my judgment the policy of the Secretary of State in adding to the strength of the European servants, in increasing enormously the expenditure on those servants, in adding to the military burdens of the country has been throughout dishonest. In his anxiety to placate the Europeans, the Secretary of State has decreed the failure of the scheme. The position of the European servants under the scheme is much stronger, much more paying, and much more effective than it was before the scheme. The policy of the Secretary of State has created a position which means constant friction between honest Indian politicians and the European servants of the Government. Whatever doubt was left in my mind has been completely shattered by the report of the Hunter Committee, and the orders of the Government of India and the Secretary of State thereupon[6]. I do not charge the European members of the Hunter Committee with dishonesty. In my judgment that was the only view of the situation it was possible for them to take on the principle on which the Government of India has been run and is being run now. If you once consider that European supremacy is essential and must be maintained at any cost, and under any circumstances, you are irresistibly led to the conclusion that any thing or act which leads to undermine the prestige and authority of the handful of Europeans governing this country must be an act of open rebellion. Under such a conception of Government the fundamental rights of

the people are nothing and at best only secondary. The first test to be applied, in judging a situation is, does the situation lead to the lowering of the prestige and the authority of the European minority? If it does, it is an act of "rebellion". What would ordinarily be rioting in England where the people have got fundamental rights, might be rebellion in India. Now the whole of this conception is based on the race superiority of the English, upon their right to rule this country even against the wishes of the people, and of their right to maintain their authority in defiance of the unanimously expressed wishes of the latter. Who can say that when the Government of India decided to pass the Rowlatt Bill in defiance of the wishes of the people, the continuation of the agitation against it on such a scale as to make it possible for the disorderly elements of the nation to commit rioting, was not an "act of rebellion" according to the conception of the Hunter Committee majority ? The minority has on the other hand judged the situation from the strict legal standard, and on the principle conceded by the Reforms Scheme. The acceptance of the majority report by the Government of India and the Secretary of State is a virtual denial of the principle on which the Reforms Scheme is based. It is practically a confirmation of the continuation of the old regime. This is specially so, when we consider what is actually happening in the Punjab. The officers who committed atrocities are still occupying positions of rank and confidence in the Punjab administration. They influence Government policy in every department of life. They support only those of the Indians who side with them whatever their character, whatever their ability and whatever their moral standard. What is the result ? Men who have been openly charged with corruption and bribery, whose conduct in the Martial Law administration has been openly challenged by specific allegations of their guilt, and of acts of bribery have been promoted by the Punjab Government ; complaints against them are hushed ; no effort is being done to bring them to justice or to show any mark of disapproval of their conduct. It is true that the Government of Sir Edward Maclagan has given a fairly good latitude to the educated community in the matter of carrying on their agitation. The Lieutenant-Governor has kept his head on his shoulders and has not allowed himself to be dominated by hysteria, nay, he has made some laudable efforts towards conciliation. For all that, credit is due to him, but there is no fundamental

change in the policy of the bureaucracy. Look at any department of public administration and you will find defiance of public opinion written on its very portals. Even in the department of commerce and industries the administration does not care a pin for public sentiments, the comfort and convenience of Indians, and the interests of the Indian trade. Even the railways are being run in the interests of the European trade. Look at the police. Never was corruption so strongly entrenched in the police department as now. I do not want to advance a sweeping charge against a department which is so essential for the safety and convenience of the people. But I say it with all sincerity, that within the last six years bribery and corruption, intimidation and extortion have established themselves to a much greater extent than before. I can say from personal observation that the police conduct of the political cases before 1914 was much purer (if any such thing could be said of it) than it has been since the advent of Sir Michael O' Dwyer. There was more fear of God and of Government and of public opinion in the minds of the subordinate police than there has been under the regime of Sir Michael O'Dwyer.[7] I find that Sir Edward Maclagan has done nothing to purge the administration and until that is done there is no chance of the administration being purified and the Reforms Scheme having the least ghost of a chance of fulfilling its purposes.

The bureaucracy relies on honours and supports those who, they believe, stood by them during the last disturbances, never mind how corrupt and immoral they may be. The educated leaders are held in suspicion and ridicule is heaped on them whenever possible.

The members of the bureaucracy and their chief organ, the *Civil and Military Gazette* are not sorry even for the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. They justify and defend the ill-treatment of the leaders and the bomb throwing at Gujranwala. The Chief Secretary has returned to the field of operations and Colonel O'Brien is still one of the pillars of the Administration.[8] How then is it possible for any honest Congressman to co-operate with the bureaucracy in the work of administration ? The bureaucracy is determined to defeat the Reforms and the Secretary of State has placed them in a position to do so successfully. In my judgment it is absolute folly to make ourselves even partially responsible for this inevitable failure. The best thing is to keep away and share no responsibility.

I personally do not believe in entering the Legislative Council with the express object of defeating the Reforms Scheme or of obstructing the Government or even of denying my co-operation in measures which are only incidental to the main springs of Government policy. It is not in my nature to be either obstructive or obstinate. In my judgment the task before the new Legislative Councils is almost impossible, there will be even greater temptation, in the way of members, of selling themselves and their conscience. A strong public opinion will be required to check it if we do not intend that all our public men should be demoralised. Under the cricumstances I think I can be more useful to my country from outside than from within the Council.

As for others, personally I would like that the best Congressmen should abstain. But if the special Congress decides otherwise and my colleagues choose to go into the Councils I will not oppose them nor carry on any agitation against them. My suggestion as to the Defence Committee was conditional, in this sense that if the majority of the Congressmen fall in with my view, the minority could be coerced in that way. But if the majority decided to go for the Councils I cannot possibly agitate against them. That is, in short, my position and as soon as my health recovers I intend to revert to the subject again. I have more material with me to show off the mentality of those with whom we are expected to co-operate in the Council Chamber.

P. S. Permit me to add the following postscriptures to the statement of my position, which I sent to you early this morning for publication in your esteemed paper. I may add for the information of your readers that the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and the *Indpendent* of Allahabad have supported my position. Even the *Mahratta* supports it in a way, exhorting all Congressmen to consider the matter well and decide in the special Session of the Congress.

The position in the Punjab stands thus. The members of the Punjab bureaucracy and the non-official Europeans in the Punjab who are likely to get into the Council believe that there was a rebellion in the Punjab last year, that that rebellion was incited and set on foot by the leaders of the educated community (Messrs. Harkishan Lal, Rambhaj Dutt Chaudhry, Duni Chand, Doctors Kitchlew and Satyapal, the lawyers of Gujranwala among others), that these persons were guilty of waging war against the King and well deserved

all the humiliations and punishment to which they were subjected, that the shooting at the Jallianwala, the throwing of bomb at Gujranwala, the flogging at Lahore, Kasur, Amritsar and Gujranwala were generally inflicted rightly and were necessary for the restoration of peace, that the conduct of General Dyer and Colonel O'Brien, Captain Doveton, Major Bosworth Smith, Lala Siri Ram and others were not only commendable but such as entitle them to our gratitude, that Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer between themselves saved not only the Punjab but India.

On all these points and many others the educated Indians and the Indian public hold diametrically opposite views. How these people of diametrically opposite views can co-operate to make the new scheme a success is a conundrum in psychology, which I will ask you to solve for us in continuation of the articles you have been writing for our benefit.

3. INDIA—AN INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM

To an Indian the problem of India is national; to humanity at large it is international. India is such a large slice of earth, and contains such a large population, that no person, interested in the progress of humanity at large and in true internationalism, can ignore its importance. Add to it the fact that it is the pivot of the Orient. As the home of Hinduism, the birth place of Buddhism, and of the most living centre of Islamic activities, it occupies a unique place in Asia. It is the heart of Asia — the key to the Indian Ocean and the clearing house of most Asiatic trade. It is also the centre of Asiatic culture. China and Japan bow to it in reverence, and Central Asia and Western Islamic countries look to it for support and sympathy. While its human potentialities are great, very great indeed, its natural resources defy imagination. Its "wealth" has been its curse. Militarism and Imperialism have always looked at it with eyes of greed. Half of the world wars have been fought directly or indirectly for it. It has in the past inspired Alexanders, Tamerlanes, Wellesleys, Tsars, and Kaisers with visions of world empires. It will continue to be the cause of future wars if its problem is not solved in such a way as to place it beyond the reach of military, adventurous, imperialistic intriguers, and industrial exploiters. It has a manly, brave, industrious, intelligent, keenly sensitive, and on the whole cultured and peacably-inclined population. At no time in their history have the people of India been exploiters of foreign nations. If left to themselves they can produce enough for themselves, with plenty of time for the cultivation of art and literature. They

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can help humanity not only with material goods, but even with intellectual and spiritual truths. Self-dependent, free from external intrigues, relying upon their manhood for their defence, and upon their womanhood for development of the finer part of human nature, they can be a bulwark to civilisation, and a bond of union between the East and the West. In blood and race they can claim kinship with both European and Asiatics; in culture, with Greece, Rome and Baghdad; in religion, with the whole world. By genius and tradition they deal in universal terms and values. They have never set up any barriers of religion, colour or creed to their hospitality, sympathy and goodwill. Even the most caste-ridden Hindu is a universalist, admitting that the soul in the meanest of mankind is the same as his, and the aim of life is to get rid of all artificial barriers and become one with the universe.

It is a tragedy of modern life with its high claims to civilisation, culture, and humanity that such a people should be bullied by a purely materialistic imperialism, kept down (and occasionally shot and killed) by the most barbarous of militarisms, and exploited by refined industrialism of the most grasping kind. It is absolutely hypocritical to talk of a League of Nations, and of the reign of true internationalism so long as these things continue to keep down one-fifth of the human race in India alone. Of course if you include the rest of Asia and Africa, the figures will reach to almost three-fourths. With the three-fourths of humanity under the heel of militaristic imperialism, starved to death both physically and intellectually by a handful of the rest, always cursing and hating their masters, always discontented and disconsolate, how can there be peace on earth ? For a handful of men, however brilliant, masterful, clever, and rich, to arrogate the power and the right to rule, dominate and bully the rest of mankind is an intolerable wrong which cannot be tolerated much longer.

There are Britons who often ask me and my compatriots: "What do we want ?" The very disingenuousness of the question is staggering, and show the utter callousness to which intelligent human beings can be reduced by the strong drink of military power. What should a nation, politically ruled by an alien race, industrially dominated by foreign capitalists, financially

exploited by greedy financiers of other lands, intellectually starved by imperial educationalists, sermoned day and night by men of no spiritual vision, want ? For one of the latter category to ask us what we want, and why we are discontented, cannot be explained by lack of imagination, but only by absolute lack of human comprehension. Why ? Do they think we are mere bricks or stones ? Why should we not be happy under British rule, they ask us ? It is a pity that the obvious answer does not strike them—because it is British and not ours. For forty years we have been trying hard to impress upon them the desirability of giving us ground to think of the British connection with India is that between sister nations, but every time they have answered us by gaols and scaffolds, deportations and transportations. Yet they pretend not to know what we want.

What we want is our manhood--the right to live our lives, the opportunity to manage our affairs, in short, to be ourselves. As Indians we can be a source of strength to Britain as well as to the rest of humanity, contributing to the world's stock of knowledge, art and science, poetry and music, co-operating freely, voluntarily and whole-heartedly in keeping the peace of the world and in carrying about the banner of human progress. As British slaves we are mere pawns in the game, to be used to crush the liberties of other nations, or as "drawers of water and hewers of wood" for the Empire. When British statesmen use Indian soldiers in Mesopotamia, Egypt and other parts of the world, they do so from calculation. They reckon that it will make us hated by the people of these countries, but they forget that the shield has another side. We do not incur hatred from the fact, but sympathy among these people who desire to see us free, so that the British may not be in a position to use us against them. In my judgment the first legislation which the proposed League of Nations should undertake is to prohibit the use of mercenary soldiers anywhere outside the land of their nativity. To let the imperial nations of the world use their subject people as mercenary soldiers to fight out imperial wars is a crime of the worst kind. So long as this can be done no small or backward or weak nations can be safe even if they are members of the so-called League of Nations.

The Bolsheviks have been held responsible for using Chinese mercenaries by Britishers who themselves are all the time using Gurkhas (who are not even British Indians), all the world over. Such is imperialistic logic. But why talk of logic ? Imperialism knows no logic. It does not deal in humanities. It is single-minded, or using President Wilson's phrase, 'it is one-tracked mind". That mind thinks only in terms of empire, of territories, of subject peoples, of markets and of wealth and glory. Everything else is only secondary.

The Indian nationalist hates nobody, not even the British imperialist. He knows that the latter is the victim of his own egoism building castles and palaces, eventually to be buried underneath their ruins. What some of them are afraid of is not the present but the future. Hatred breeds hatred, distrust distrust, imperialism nationalism. What men of my kind dread is not so much the future of our country as the fate of the world, in case the present hatred between the nations becomes the ruling passion of the East. We dread to think of the future of the world in case India and China imbibe the spirit of the West and join hands with Islam in Central and Western Asia. Let the gods beware of sowing the wind, lest they may have to reap the whirlwind.

The time for petty concessions is gone. Whether the Sultan remains in Constantinople or is driven back to Anatolia is not of so great an importance as the Indian problem. Of course, we Indians want the Sultan to remain in Constantinople. But what really matters is a satisfactory solution of the problem of India from the Indian point of view.

The Montagu Reforms are, at best, a belated, tardy, and inadequate recognition of the importance of the Indian problem.

4. CONGRESS PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

MY FIRST duty is to tender to you most cordial thanks for the high honour you have done me in calling me to this office, the highest in your gift and at a session which is perhaps the most momentous in the history of our movement. The honour is the greater because the session is being held at Calcutta, a place which has always been associated in my mind with the best and the truest ideals of Indian Nationalism. It was at Calcutta that the first important political movement of the last century was ushered into existence, and it was a Calcutta orator, the greatest that the country has so far produced under British rule, who was the first standard-bearer of political agitation all over Northern India[1]. It was at Calcutta that the ideals of the new Nationalism that has since then grown into a mighty tree, were first expounded and explained by one of the purest minded and the most intellectual of Bengal's gifted sons. I mean Sri Arabinda Ghosh. It was at Calcutta again that the Grand Old Man of India, the revered and universally respected Dadabhai Naoroji, set the ideal of Swaraj before us in clear and unambiguous language, an ideal which has since guided us in all our political endeavours.

A GREAT STRUGGLE

It was with great reluctance that I made up my mind to accept the call of duty to which the the All India Congress Committee by its decision invited me. Our politics are no more of the old hum-drum kind, about which practically there was no, or if at all very little difference of opinion. We are no longer contented with resolutions, prayers and memorials. We have advanced beyond the

Presidential Address delivered by Lala Lajpat Rai at the Special Session of the Indian National Congress held at Calcutta, on 4 September, 1920.

first stage of very humble submission, have crossed the boundaries of respectful demand, and have entered into the arena of backing our demands by vigorous and compelling action of a peaceful kind. The country is at the present moment in the throes of a momentous struggle. The Anglo-Indian press has designated it as revolutionary. There are many people to whom the word revolution is like a red rag to a bull. I am not one of them. Words do not sear me. It is no use blinking the fact that we are passing through a revolutionary period, nay, we are already in the grip of a mighty revolution, a comprehensive and all-covering one, religious, intellectual, educational, social, economic and political. We are by instinct and tradition averse to revolutions. Traditionally, we are a slow going people; but when we decide to move, we do move quickly and by rapid strides. No living organism can altogether escape revolutions in the course of its existence. Our national history records many such. But the revolutionary struggle through which we are now passing has been brought to our shores by our rulers. It is they who completely changed without our consent and sometimes against our wishes, the whole structure of our social life by introducing revolutionary economic changes in the country. We never asked for them, we never desired them; but primarily in their own interests and for their own benefit they introduced them. Along with these economic changes, they have partially, if not completely, changed our outlook on life by their system of education, by their newspapers, by their laws and by their courts. Some of these changes we would very much like to undo, but whether we or even they can do so now is at best problematic. Any way, the present political situation is a natural outcome of their own policy and is their handiwork. If then any one is to be blamed for it (I for one do not blame any one), it is they themselves. Many of them would probably like to set the hands of the clock back but it is no longer in their power nor is it in ours to do so. We are following a course which we shall have to keep to, and whether we wish it or not, we are, I repeat, in the thick of a great struggle, the end of which no one can foresee. The better mind of the country is opposed to the use of any kind of violence, whether of language or of deed, in bringing the struggle to a satisfactory close; we are doing our level best sincerely and honestly to achieve our end by peaceful means and with the sincerest desire to keep our connection with the ruling class on a basis of mutual

friendship and reciprocal interest. But there are persons among the latter who are bent upon thwarting us, who professedly and openly claim their right to rule us by the sword, and who maintain that they have a right to exploit us by all the means available to them by virtue of their military and intellectual power. We are thus face to face with a great struggle between the forces of democratic change, English and Indian, and reactionary militarism. In order to go through the struggle successfully, we will require all the manliness and strength, all the wisdom and tact and all the determination and strength we are capable of putting forth. Above all what we need most is calmness and coolness of judgment, moderation in language and firmness in action.

At such a time and under such circumstances, the loss of a leader like the late lamented Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak[2] is a misfortune and a calamity, the magnitude of which it is difficult to encompass by words. Just when we had the greatest need of his unswerving loyalty and steadfast devotion to the cause of his country, his cool and calm judgment, his unfaltering and firm patriotism, an inscrutable providence has snatched him from us. The universal grief which this sad event has evoked, and the unique demonstrations which have followed his death throughout the length and breadth of this vast sub-continent, have been a revelation both to his friends and foes. This extraordinary manifestation of popular feeling is almost unparalleled in the history of India. All sections of people, regardless of caste, creed and colour, regardless of social, religious and political divisions, regardless of economic distinctions have taken part in it, and have given conclusive proof, if any was needed that in estimating the worth of its leaders and its servants, the country knows its mind and has no inclination of allowing its judgment to be affected by the wishes and opinions of the highest amongst the dignitaries of the State. Here and there a few mean attempts were made to insinuate that the deceased leader was anti-Muslim, but our Muslim fellow countrymen have been the most forward and the most fervent in the expressions of their regard and love for him. Some members of the ruling class, too, have behaved with admirable judgment. Great as has been the loss of the country generally, the loss of the Indian National Congress is even greater. The Congress has by his death lost one of its few surviving

founders, one who by his indomitable will and energy and his unique sacrifices and sufferings had contributed the most to building up of that life of the country which finds its expression in the present activities of this national movement. It will be one of the first items of business of this Session to put on record in befitting language our sense of the great and irreparable loss we have suffered by death of Lokmanya Tilak.

NATIONAL PROBLEMS

This Session of the Congress has been convened in accordance with an understanding arrived at between the leaders at the Amritsar Congress, for the purpose of considering the Hunter Committee Report and the decision of the Government thereupon relating to the Punjab disturbances of the last year. Since the Amritsar Congress[3] finished its labours, another important question has been added to our national problems, which requires a speedy and immediate consideration both in the interests of peace and good government. The disappointment which has been caused to our Muslim countrymen by the Turkish Peace Treaty and its effects on the Khilafat[4] is keen and bitter. Lastly, there is the important question of Reform Rules[5] on which the success of the Reforms, such as they are, so largely depends. The All-India Congress Committee, therefore, have added the Khilafat question and also the rules and regulations under the Reforms Act, to the subject for which originally, according to the understanding at the Amritsar Congress, this Session was to be convened. These, then, are the subjects which will be before you during this Session for consideration and decision.

PUNJAB DISORDERS

Taking the Punjab disorders first, since we met last at Amritsar, the Congress Commissioners appointed by the Punjab enquiry Sub-Committee of the All India Congress Committee have issued their report[6]. The Hunter Committee appointed by the Government of India have also finished their labours and published their report, and the Government of India and the British Cabinet have passed their orders on that report. The report of the Hunter Committee is not unanimous. All the Indian members have differed from the majority on matters which in my judgment are "basic".[7] Similarly, the Government of India also are not unanimous. The only Indian

member of the Government of India (at the time) has accepted the conclusions of the minority and differed from the majority[8]. The country has with one voice condemned the majority report as well as the decision of the Government thereupon. We, in this Congress are expected to focus the opinion of the country in the matter and recommend such action as we think ought to be taken for the redress of the wrong that has been done.

To arrive at a proper understanding of the position, one has to look into a whole lot of circumstances which preceded the agitation against the Rowlatt Act and to bear in mind that the person who is principally responsible for the Punjab tragedy, the man whose general policy created the atmosphere which made it possible for a Dyer, a Bosworth Smith, an O'Brien, a Doveton, a Frank Johnson and other smaller fry, to commit the unmentionable outrages of which they were guilty, in the five days immediately preceding the introduction of Martial Law, and all through its coutinuance in the spring of 1919 in the Punjab, is Sir Michael O'Dwyer. From the very moment he took charge of the Province he set before him an ideal of government which was Prussian in conception, Prussian in aim and Prussian in execution. For six long years he occupied himself in working out his ideals and in carrying out his plans. Every item was carefully thought out, and with equal care entrusted to agents who were most fitted and willing to achieve the end desired by the Head of the Government. If ever there intervened an obstacle or a hindrance it was removed without the least pang of conscience, and without the slightest consideration of its morality or even legality, so much so that even the European members of the Indian Civil Service who refused to endorse his opinions or to carry out his mandate had to retire into the background.

To the misfortune of the Punjabees, the Punjab happens to be practically a military Province on account of its nearness to the Frontier, and because of there being so many military stations in the vicinity of the most important civil stations. The Punjab Commission has, besides, always had on its personnel, a good many representatives of the military service. The Punjab bureaucracy has thus been more or less always dominated by military ideals, and the civil administration of that Province has never been absolutely

free from military influence. The Civilians, living in or in the vicinity of military stations and passing about six months in the year in hill stations, where the military predominate, are consciously or unconsciously affected by the opinions and views of their military fellow-officers. No wonder then that in spite of the lavish praises bestowed on the Punjabees by the Anglo-Indian administrators, and in spite of the most extravagant solicitude shown by them in words for the prosperity of the Punjab, the bulk of the Punjabees are the most ignorant and the most abjectly situated of all the people of India. It is extremely painful, specially for a Punjabee to say that under and in consequence of the British rule, the manly races of the Punjab should have lost that independence of character and bearing for which they had a name in Indian history prior to British rule. It will be no exaggeration to say that for military reasons the bureaucracy has kept the martial races of the Punjab ignorant and in conditions of submissiveness bordering on abject servility. The Punjabees are reputed to have a splendid physique. The rural Punjab is the flower of British Indian army. Even urban Punjab has a population which is physically superior to the similarly placed people of other parts of India; yet it is remarkable that whenever plague and influenza have attacked the Province, the Punjabees have been the most willing to die in entirely disproportionate numbers. One may naturally ask, why ? The answer is because of the dense ignorance of the Punjab masses, because of the lack of adequate medical staff, because of the inadequate measures of sanitation, and last but not least, because of the lack of that political consciousness which makes men self-reliant and self-respecting. The exigencies of militarism have inspired the policy of keeping the Punjab peasantry illiterate as well as politically dumb. But for the strength of character shown by some of Sir Michael O'Dwyer's predecessors in the office of the Lieutenant-Governor particularly Sir C. Aitchison[9] and Sir Dennis Fitzpatrick[10] the Punjab would have been in a still worse position.

The policy of militarism, however, reached its climax with the advent in the Province of Sir Michael O'Dwyer who had been absent from the Province for about 15 years, having originally served there in minor capacities, returned as the head of the Government with a determination to crush the spirit which had made 1907 and 1910 possible. In 1913 when he took charge of the Province the people

had considerably changed from what they had been when he was last there. They were not so very submissive and there was a little political awakening also. To crush this political awakening was one of his principal aims. So when he returned he set before him as his ideal a Prussian system of administration. All through the period of his office he was guided by that ideal.

(i) I charge him with having deliberately intensified the policy of 'divide and rule' by keeping apart the Mahomedans from the Hindus and both from the Sikhs.

(ii) I charge him with having created fresh political divisions between the people of the Province by drawing purely artificial and mischievous distinctions between martial and educated classes and between the rural and urban interests and creating unhealthy rivalry between them.

(iii) I charge him with having made illegal use of the process of law and of his authority for recruitment purposes, and for getting contributions for the war loan and other war funds.

(iv) I charge him with having condoned and in a way encouraged the most brutal and diabolic deeds of those who were his tools in recruiting and war loan campaigns and with having failed to check bribery and corruption among the subordinate police and magistracy.

(v) I charge him with having debased and misused the forms and processes of law for the purpose of crushing those who would not bend their knees to him and who showed the slightest independence of spirit and a desire for political advancement.

(vi) I charge him with having deliberately deceived the Government of India as to the necessity of Martial Law, and as to the necessity of trying cases of ordinary sedition under the process of that law. He was guilty of a clear falsehood at this stage when he suggested to the Government of India that the General Officer Commanding in the Punjab agreed with his views.

(vii) I charge him with having deliberately manipulated the continuance of Martial Law for vindictive and punitive purposes when there was no rebellion and there was no likelihood of a recrudescence of disturbances in that Province.

(viii) I charge him with having been instrumental, by express or tacit consent and by encouragement, by word and deed, in the promulgation of barbarous orders and the infliction of barbarous punishments and humiliations on the people of the Punjab.

(ix) I charge him at least with being an accessory after the event of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. By his unqualified approval of the Jallianwala massacre he made himself responsible for all the outrages committed by the Martial Law administrators in pursuance of his policy.

(x) I charge him with having connived at perfectly illegal exactions from the people of the Punjab in the shape of punitive fines and penalties.

(xi) I charge him with culpable neglect of duty in not going to Amritsar, first on the 11th (April 1919) after the deplorable events of the 10th, and then on the 14th after the massacre at the Jallianwala Bagh.

(xii) I charge him, lastly, with having extorted addresses from the people of the Punjab, on the eve of his departure by illegal and mean threats, one of them having been altered in a material particular when in the custody of his minions, and having made a dishonest use of them in his defence in England.

These are serious charges, and I bring them with all the weight of the office to which you have raised me with common consent of the country. I challenge an enquiry and I declare before God and man that my Province and my people will not be satisfied until such an enquiry has been made.*

I have now done with the story of the Punjab. I have given the story at some length, because I began by formulating certain charges against Sir Michael O'Dwyer at the commencement of my address, and it was my duty to make out a *prima facie* case in support of these charges. I hope and trust that I have made out my case to your satisfaction, that of all the persons who had anything to do with the introduction of Martial Law in the Punjab and with the events that preceded and followed it, Sir Michael was the chief

*This charge-sheet against Michael O'Dwyer is followed by detailed evidence in support of the charges. The evidence has been omitted here.

culprit. Indeed I may venture to assert that no man in the whole history of British Rule in India has done *such a great disservice to the British Empire and has brought such disgrace on the gond name of the British nation as* Sir *Michael O'Dwyer.*

The root cause of all this evil, as I have pointed out before, is the Prussian conception of Government which dominates the minds of so many of our Anglo-Indian rulers of whom Sir Michael O'Dwyer was the type and which places the State as something above and beyond the people. It was that conception of Government which made it possible for Lord Chelmsford's Government to pass the Rowlatt Bill into law[11] ; it was this conception which made it possible for Sir Michael O'Dwyer to deport Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal and subsequently to have Martial Law declared in the Punjab. Every official who has had anything to do with this lamentable affair was filled with the same idea, namely, of making an example, 'teaching a lesson', 'creating moral effect' and 'restoring the prestige of Government' by terrorism and frightfulness. General Dyer boasted that he had acted with that motive. Colonel O'Brien, Captain Doveton, Lieutenant-Colonel Macrae, Lieutenant-Colonel Johnson, Mr. Bosworth Smith, and even some of the Judges who presided at the trial of Martial Law offenders were all inspired by the same ideal, which made many of them inhuman in their dealings with the Punjabees during the terrible days of the Martial Law. We had the sad spectacle of a Government and its high officials neglecting to take the most essential precautions for preventing unnecessary sacrifice of life and property in the carrying out of their plans. They admit that in no cases, where they resorted to firing and shooting, did they make any provision for first-aid to the wounded. In some cases they even refused to make over the bodies of the dead to their relatives. In others they took no notice of the dead. We have also evidence of the fact that troops destroyed property wholesale in the districts through which they passed, that even high officials of the standing of Deputy Commissioners exacted all kinds of contributions from the people within their respective jurisdiction ; that they obtained articles of food and other necessities of life without paying for them, and in addition realised levies and fines and penalties from whole populations. We have also evidence of the fact that in giving effect to the orders of Martial Law Tribunals about the forfeiture of property, inhuman cruelties were practised on the women and

children of the 'offenders'. In some cases they were thrown on the streets and were not even allowed to take sufficient clothing for the night and this was done not by subordinate officials but by high officers.

I have narrated the events of Sir Michael O'Dwyer's administration at some length in order to show that it was all through, a regime of terrorism and frightfulness in the literal sense of these words and that it was only carried to its logical conclusion in the months of April and May, 1919. In the words used by Mr. Montagu[12] with reference to the action of General Dyer the ideals which Sir Michael O'Dwyer had set before himself were 'terrorism, humiliation and subordination' and they reached their climax in the promulgation and administration of Martial Law. Witness after witness has appeared before the Hunter Committee and has practically boasted of his acts of cruelty and oppression. General Dyer himself has justified all that he did[13]. Colonel Frank Johnson is proud of everything that was done by him. He said in one case that that was one of the few brain waves he had in his life. Captain Doveton, Colonel O'Brien, Major Bosworth Smith all testify in the same spirit. There was only one incident for which Colonel Frank Johnson expressed his regret, and that was the flogging of the marriage party. Others were not sorry for anything, and said that they would do the same thing if ever there was a chance of doing so. Here then we have the tragedy of the situation.

We believe that the principles and conduct of these men are entirely opposed to the traditions and the policy of the British Government, particularly the policy that underlies the Reform Scheme. We are afraid, however, that in the Punjab the majority of the bureaucracy are of the same mentality. The vast majority of the non-official European community is also of the same mind and so are a good many of the European and American missionaries. If such is the mentality of so many members of the Indian Civil Service, who, after all, are the real rulers of the country and in whom is vested the task of administration, what is the remedy. In the face of the statements made before the Hunter Committee by European witnesses, the wholesale defence of General Dyer and others by the Anglo-Indian Press and the Anglo-Indian community, the raising of memorial funds for him and in his honour, and last but not the least, the resolution passed by the House of Lords,[14] how-

can we Indians, possibly, assume that the British in England and the European community in India generally have accepted, in sincerity, the Reform Scheme and the principles that underlie it ? These principles imply that if not at once at least in a short time we must be free in our own country, with power to make and unmake our Governments, subject only to the maintenance of the Imperial tie, it being our interest and right to shorten the period of transition as much as possible. The Indian Civil Service and the European community of India and the House of Lords evidently think otherwise. They conceive it to be in their interest to prolong the period of transition by all methods open to them and many of them are frankly anxious to defeat the Reforms Scheme and revert to the old system of Government. If then the struggle between these two interests is to be conducted on the lines that were in evidence in the Martial Law regime, it seems to be absolutely futile to think of friendly co-operation between the two interests. It is all very well for those who are still in power to ask us to drop the matter and let by-gones be by-gones. I wish I could ask you to do the same. I am not actuated by any vindictive and revengeful motive, and I fully believe that my people are not ; but how can we sit silent and let the matter drop in the face of all that has happened in India and in England, in connection with the events of last year until full and complete justice has been done and until steps have been taken to prevent a recurrence of the tragic state of things. The Government of India and the British Cabinet have gone out of their way to praise and belaud a man whom we consider to be the chief culprit in this whole drama of oppression and tyranny. If that praise is justified and if we acquiesce in by our silence, then surely we deserve what was done to us. If not, then, it is our duty to press for the punishment and prosecution of Sir Michael O'Dwyer.

The Punjab tragedy was not a provincial affair, but a national one. Our manhood, our self-respect, our national dignity, nay, our very existence as a nation, depends on our having the principles and practices of Sir Michael O'Dwyer condemned, and once for all abrogated. We owe it to ourselves, to our women, to our children and also to those unborn, to fight it out and not let the matter drop without obtaining full and unqualified redress, and without obtaining effective guarantees that it will not be possible for any one, however, high his position in the Government of the country, to

enact such like tragedies again. It is our duty also to repudiate as emphatically as we can the fundamentally erroneous, I was going to say, vicious and Prussian conception, which found frequent expression in Sir Michael O'Dwyer's speeches, that the security of life and property is the primary duty of Government. The security of life and property is only a means to an end. What is the end ? The uplifting of the human race and its progress towards the fullness of freedom, which means towards divinity. "Peace is a good thing, but life is still better", says Rabindranath Tagore in one of his essays on Nationalism.

If the British rulers of India propose to give us mere security of life and property by denying us honour and liberty we must refuse to have them. There is no life without freedom and there is no freedom without "Swarajya" or self-government.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I believe I give expression to your sentiments when I say to our rulers, that although the British Government is mighty enough to crush all our efforts by their military power, any success they achieved by military efforts would be a very expensive one. The British Raj is no longer synonymous with justice and fair-play in the mind of the average citizen and the more it is dragged into the mire by men like Sir Michael O'Dwyer, the more it will lose in what has hitherto constituted its boast.

We, on our part, are determined not to let our morale go under, to fight only a clean fight. We shall continue to condemn unhesitatingly and unequivocally all those who commit violence or insult or humiliate women, irrespective of their nationality, or who commit such acts of inhumanity as characterised the Dyers Dovetons, Johnsons, O'Briens and others of the Punjab tragedy. If all this fails to bring us the necessary relief, I for one hope and believe that it will not, well, then the future is in the lap of the gods. I want in your name and in the name of the country which we have the honour to represent, to tell Mr. Montagu and through him the British Cabinet, that we accept in full the principles that he has laid down in the speech which he made in the course of the Dyer debate in the House of Commons. For our part we are fully prepared to act on those principles and to cherish the connection with the British Commonwealth as a desirable privilege, but shall be

deceiving ourselves as well as Mr. Montagu if we do not tell him also that in the light of the events that happened in the Punjab last year, the people of this country require something more than speeches and resolutions and despatches to prove that the British Cabinet and the British people are equally sincere and equally earnest for the principles laid down by Mr. Montagu. Here let me make one thing clear. If partnership of the Commonwealth means full freedom to us in India, with responsibility for the burden of the Commonwealth to the extent of our interest in it, we accept that ideal of partnership but if partnership in the Empire means and includes the permanence of racial or alien domination in any shape, form or degree in the Government of India, then we do not accept that ideal. We are determined at no distant date to be entirely free in our country, in the same sense as South Africans are free in South Africa, Canadians in Canada, Australians in Australia and the British at home. Any qualification of that ideal we will not admit. All those Europeans who are domiciled in this country are our countrymen, and it shall be our duty to respect their rights in the same way as we shall respect the rights of any other community in India. But beyond this we are not prepared to go. Further we are also determined not to let ourselves be used as willing tools to crush the liberties of the rest of the world. We of the Indian National Congress have declared that we are quite fit for complete autonomy even now, yet we did accept, however inadequate and unsatisfactory, the instalment given to us as evidence of *bona fides* of the British statesmen. We were prepared to work out the Reform Scheme to the best of our ability as a stepping stone to full responsible Government, but we must frankly tell Mr. Montagu that the events of the Punjab have shaken our faith in the motives of those who seek our co-operation in the ostensible working out of the Refom Scheme.

I will conclude this part of my address by stating in brief what we want, (*a*) We want complete and unequivocal repudiation and condemnation of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and if possible his prosecution and punishment. We also want that an open enquiry be held into the methods adopted by Sir Michael O'Dwyer in the recruiting campaign and in raising war loans and war funds. (*b*) We want the release of the remaining Martial Law prisoners and all the men that are still rotting in jails under convictions of the Special Tribunals and the Martial Law Courts. We shall be quite ready to have

such of them re-tried by ordinary courts as were accused of murders or other charges of that nature ; but we refuse to accept the judgments of the Special and the Martial Law Courts as good judicial pronouncements. (*c*) We insist that all the loss incurred by the people of the Punjab by the vagaries of the troops and the officials in the course of the Martial Law administration be made good and that all punitive fines and penalties imposed and recovered be remitted and returned. (*d*) We demand that all the disqualifications that are involved in the conviction of men by the Martial Law Tribunals be set aside, either by law or by a general order of the Government. (*e*) We further require that an open enquiry be held into the charges of bribery, corruption, extortion and torture that have been made by the witnesses before the Congress Commissioners against Police Officers of whatever rank, and other officials. (*f*) We also insist that if the authors of the Reform Scheme want a fair trial for it, they must remove from the Punjab all such officers as were connected with the outrages, as a proof of their *bona fides*. (*g*) If there be any others in the Punjab or elsewhere who do not accept the principles of the Reform Scheme they also must go, even if they have to be retired on suitable pensions. They should not be there to desert the Reform Scheme by the exercise of powers that are still left to them to a very great extent by the Reform Scheme itself. The Department of Law and the control of the Police is entirely in their hands and unless the people of India get control of these Departments they cannot effectively prevent the higher officials from exercising these powers high-handedly and arbitrarily as they did in the Punjab and as, to our knowledge and regret, they are doing even now in some places. (*h*) The Government of India too must shoulder their share of the responsibility for the Punjab tragedy. Their decision on the Hunter Committee's Report was a foregone conclusion. All the credit which they were entitled to, for their efforts to shorten the period of Martial Law has been discounted by their present justification of its continuance. If the view which the British Cabinet has taken of General Dyer's action and of the excesses of the Martial Law administration is correct[15] (and it is much below the reality), then I submit the least that Lord Chelmsford can do with honour is to retire from his high office. If Mr. Austen Chamberlain thought it his duty to resign his office on account of the verdict of the Mesopotamia Commission, I

submit there is enough in the Hunter Committee's Report (of both the majority and the minority) which should induce Lord Chelmsford to take the same honourable course. The Viceroy and his Cabinet have been guilty of gross dereliction of duty in failing to check the vagaries of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, and in failing to exercise that power of control which law and tradition vested in them. They let the people of the Punjab sulk and suffer under the impression that there was no one to hear their cries.

Under the circumstances the country's demand for the recall of the Viceroy seems to be just and proper.

Speaking of the Government of India, I must not omit to make mention of the noble stand made by our distinguished countryman, Sir Sankaran Nair[16], against the policy of the Government relating to the Punjab. His forcible protests, ending in his resignation from his high office, are worthy of the best traditions of Indian patriotism and will be remembered as long as India is articulate. His bold, blunt and burning love of justice and fairplay, his high sense of duty and absolute disregard of personal losses are such as to make every Indian proud of him.

Ladies and Gentlemen, before I close this account of the wrongs inflicted on the Punjab, I must tell you that the narrative is by no means exhaustive. For want of time and space I have omitted many facts and incidents, as telling as those related, and I believe there are many more which have not yet been brought to light. The Punjab Provincial Congress Committee have resolved to undertake the work of investigation from the point where it was left by the Congress Commissioners, so as to complete the record, as far as practicable. Nor must I pass to the next subject without recording the bright side of this gruesome tale. It is true that Sir Michael O'Dwyer did succeed in terrorising and overawing the Punjabees for a while, but as soon as the first shock was over, the people recovered almost instantaneously. Those who were arrested and prosecuted, behaved most heroically, those whom they had left behind including little children and women, bore their misfortunes nobly. To the eternal glory of Indian womanhood, Ratan Devi defied the curfew order of General Dyer, and watched all night by the corpse of her dead husband in the Jallianwala Bagh. The boys

who were accused of waging war against His Majesty's the King, never showed the slightest anxiety about their lives.

Of the victims of official aggression there is one man whose name I must mention, who by his cool and calm behaviour, his bold and defiant attitude, his manly notions of self-respect and honour, historic indifference to consequences set an example for others and earned the ever-lasting respect of his countrymen. I refer, of course, to Lala Harkishen Lal.

Having passed through the fire of Martial Law, the Punjab is today purer, stronger, more advanced, more determined, more patriotic and very much more united. The so-called backward Muslim masses are vying with their Hindu countrymen in showing a united political front, and the Sikhs (young and old) are outdoing themselves. No words can describe their enthusiasm for political regeneration and their readiness to suffer and sacrifice.

If Martial Law has produced such good results in the Punjab itself, it has done still greater wonders in the cause of Indian unity. The political consciousness of the people of Indian has advanced by at least ten years. I believe I am giving expression to your sentiments, Ladies and Gentlemen, when I say that the country owes a deep debt of gratitude to the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, the Hon'ble Pandit Moti Lal Nehru, the most revered Mahatma M. K. Gandhi and Messrs. C. R. Das, Jayakar and Tyebji. Our immortal Rabindranath Tagore's letter to the Viceroy[17] will ever remain the charter of national self-respect and dignity, for the future generations of India. As a Punjabee I must offer my gratitude to all who have espoused the cause of my province in her hour of affliction. As an Indian I am proud of the stand made by the country. Surely, it is a new day and a most cheering day to find that in this matter the Hon'ble Mian Mahomed Shafi[18] should be on the same side, as the most uncompromising Indian radical politician, be he of Bengal or of Maharashtra. The one Englishman, whose name I must mention with gratitude is Mr. C. F. Andrews[19], who is now one of us. Nor can we withhold our praise from the Indian members of the Hunter Committee, for their independence of character and for the statesmanlike view they have taken of the affairs in the Punjab. The country's best thanks are due to them for their lucid and masterly report.

They say that every cloud has its silver lining. To me it looks as if the Punjab tragedy has a golden hue, with the memory of the Amritsar martyrs, with the pictures of Ratan Devi, Madan Mohan and Khushi Ram engraved on our hearts, with the recollection of the dying Muslim urchin, who invoked the "Hindu Musalman ki jai" with his last breath, with the example of the sufferers of the Martial Law, we will march on to our goal of national unity and national freedom, with hope and confidence.

KHILAFT QUESTION

The second question that has been referred to the Special Session of the Congress, for consideration and decision is the question of the "Khilafat". Seventy millions of our Muslim countrymen are stirred over it. The question has two aspects ; the religious and the political. We of the Indian National Congress have no jurisdiction to go into the merits of the Khilafat question from the religious point of view. In the words of Mr. Leland Buxton "it does not in the least matter what Professor this or Doctor that thinks the Muslims ought to believe. What does matter is, that the vast majority of Sunni Muslims do believe that the Sultan of Turkey is their Khalifa and the interests of Islam require him to be the head of a large, powerful and independent State." The Mohamedan Law-books define the boundaries of such a State.

There is perfect unanimity among the Mohamedans of India on the religious merits of the question. I do not believe there could be more than one person in a million among the *Sunni* Mohamedans of India who entertains any doubts in the matter. We may then take it for granted that the interpretation put upon this matter by the Central Khilafat Committee is correct. It was a matter for our Mohamedan countrymen to decide and they have decided it. They contend that the Turkish Peace Treaty[20] violates the fundamentals of Islam, prevents them from fulfilling their religious obligations, makes it impossible for them to maintain friendly relations with a nation which is the cause of it.

They also maintain that the Turkish Settlement has violated the solemn pledges given to the people of India by British statesmen during the War.

In the first place, after the declaration of the War between England and Turkey in 1914, the Government of India on behalf of His Majesty's Government as also the Government of France and Russia promptly issued a proclamation assuring "His Majesty's most loyal Muslim subjects" that "no question of a religious character was involved" in the War "and disclaiming any British designs against the Holy Places of Islam". Again in January 1918 speaking in the name of the whole Empire the British Prime Minister made the following unambiguous and remarkable pronouncement :

"Nor are we fighting to deprive Turkey of its capital or of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor which are predominantly Turkish in race." Finally, came the armistice with Turkey, and it is important to recall that it was signed on the basis of President Wilson's twelfth point, (one of his famous fourteen points set forth in his message to the Congress dated the 8th January, 1918), which is as follows :

"That the Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured of secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities now under Turkish rule should be assured security of life and autonomous development."

Now, ask the Muslims, have these promises and pledges been redeemed ? It is the bare truth to say that in the treaty presented to the Turkish Plenipotentiaries on May 11th last and since signed by the Turkish Government, every single principle contained in the declarations I have cited above, has been palpably violated. Non-interference with the Muslim religious practices and obligations, non-molestation of Islamic Holy Places and respect for Turkish territorial and National integrity have all been *thrown overboard.*" This is the Muslim contention and the whole of India has accepted it as true.

So much then from the Mohamedan point of view.

But there are in my judgment other issues also involved in the Turkish Peace Treaty which deserve consideration. I maintain that any further extension of the British Empire in Asia is detrimental to the interests of India and fatal to the liberties of the human race. The British have frequently used Indian troops to conquer various parts of Asia and Africa. For a long time there was an

unwritten law which every European Chancellory considered binding on itself, that non-European troops were not to be used in any European war. This was abolished in the last war. African troops and Indian troops were used during and after the war by the Allies in Europe. Black troops were in occupation of Germany and possibly they may be still there. Gurkhas were, for some time, stationed in Ireland. I do not, of course, resent the abolition of the invidious social bar. From that point of view, I may even welcome it, but surely it widens the scope of militarism. British suzerainty in Arabia and British occupation of Mesopotamia involves the practical absorption of Persia and Central Asia and perhaps, later on of Afghanistan as well, into the British Empire. What has happened in India will happen in these countries too, *i. e.*, the general population will be disarmed and a number of them enrolled and drilled in the army. With the memory of the Dyer debates fresh in our minds, let my countrymen imagine the effect of that procedure on their own liberties as well as those of the rest of the world. The prospect of having Arabian, Persian and Afghan regiments in India cannot be pleasant to those of us who are working for the freedom of this country. It may be said that the contingency is very remote and fanciful. I am afraid I cannot agree in that view. What is remote today becomes near tomorrow. If the British Imperialist has no scruples in using Indian troops in Egypt, Persia, Arabia, Mesopotamia, Syria and Central Asia, why will he have any in using the troops he raises in these countries against us ? The Hindu-Muslim problem will become ten times more troublesome and dangerous, if this turns out to be true.

Then there is another aspect of the question. If the Muslim population of these countries continues to resist British attempts at occupation which they are likely to do for years, the Indian army will be in constant requisition to fight their battles in those regions, which means a constant and never-ending drain on our resources, both human and economic. The best interests of India, therefore, require that the Muslim countries in Western Asia should remain free and independent. Their amalgamation in the British Empire even under the pretence of mandatory jurisdiction, is likely to be extremely harmful to us. We know what these mandates really mean. The British have to maintain 80,000 troops in Mesopotamia

and the French the same number in Syria. They have spent money like water on these territories even after the war. This is not being done for the benefit of these backward countries. Several wars are going on at this minute in what were Turkish territories before.

It may be contended that this view ignores the League of Nations and the United States. Well, gentlemen, there is no such thing as the League of Nations. Great Britain and France are the League. As for the United States, they are averse to any entanglements in foreign politics. They will not raise their little finger to save the liberties of the world unless theirs are in danger.

But it may also be said that this view ignores the possibility of Labour coming into power in Great Britain. Well, so long as Labour does not actually come into power it will be foolish for us to count upon the contingency in deciding what attitude we shall take on current problems, which brook no delay. For the present it seems that Junkerism and Militarism have obtained a fresh lease of life in Great Britain. For evidence one has to read carefully the speeches made in the course of the Dyer debate in both the Houses of Parliament. These speeches would not have been delivered in 1917 and 1918.

The question then resolves itself into the following :

(*a*) Are we voluntarily and of our free will going to acquiesce in British Junkerism crushing Muslim liberties in Western Asia, and trample upon Indian religious susceptibilities without joining our protest with that of our Muslim countrymen against this immoral and unjust attempt ?

(*b*) Are we to sit silent and let the British Junkers ride rough shod over the pledges under which they obtained our country's help in the war against Turkey ?

(*c*) Are we going to lose this opportunity of cementing the Hindu-Muslim *Entente* for the common purpose of Indian liberties in India, and Muslim liberties in Muslim countries ?

(*d*) We, of the Indian National Congress, have always believed that the fabric of Indian liberties cannot be built safe and secure except upon the foundation of a close understanding between the two communities. The British bureaucrats have from time to

time been deliberately playing the one against the other, and for a time they succeeded. Now is the time for us to convince our Muslim brothers that we were and are sincere in our desire for Muslim friendship. The bureaucrats now want to play the Hindus against the Muslims. In fact they were already at the game. It was the spectacle of Hindu-Muslim unity at Amritsar that finally exasperated Sir Michael O'Dwyer and drove him mad. The Hindu-Muslim unity was declared to be anti-British for no reason whatsoever except that to Anglo-Indian bureaucrats, it was an unpleasant spectacle. It was not anti-Indian when they freely used the Muslims to denounce the Hindus, but it became anti-British, the moment Muslims began to fraternise with the Hindus. Such is the mentality of so many of the Anglo-Indian bureaucrats.

I do not believe there are any Indian Muslims who want Muslim sovereignty in India, but if there be any such we should not be afraid of them. If it came to it, we know how to defend our liberties with or without British aid. How long are we going to be afraid of shadows and be deceived by imaginary fears set before us as a justification of despotic rule? But all this is on the assumption that there is going to be a fight. I for one do not believe that there is any likelihood of one. The Muslims of India do not want to turn out the British; even if they wanted it they could not do so. What they need and ask for is our moral and constitutional support in the present crisis regarding the Khilafat, and we should have no hesitation in giving it to them unreservedly.

I think it is a perfectly legitimate and constitutional demand that the Indian troops should no more be used anywhere outside India. They were taken out to defend the Empire when the Empire was in danger. The war which threatened the whole Empire is over and the troops sent by the Dominions have returned to their homes. So should ours. The Indian army exists to defend the Indian Empire and not for an aggressive Imperial policy of extension and expansion.

As to how far the Hindus should go with their Muslim countrymen in the latter's campaign of non-co-operation is a question which it is for you to discuss and decide. All that I can say at this stage is that we should go as far as we can, consistently with our

duty to the country, even if we have to suffer. The Hindu-Muslim unity betokens the dawn of a new day in the history of India and it will be extremely foolish and short-sighted to throw this chance which only comes once perhaps in a century on the bidding of those who worship at the shrine of Dyerism.

The prospect of Hindu-Muslim unity has already brightened the horizon and outlook of many an Indian who had taken to despair. It has cheered many a dying patriot at Amritsar and other places.

Mr. Maqbul Mohamed of Amritsar has in his evidence before the Congress Commissioners related two touching incidents which are worth mentioning here. Speaking of the pathetic scenes he witnessed after the firing on the carriage bridge at Amritsar, on the 10th of April, he says :

"I witnessed many pathetic scenes and some gruesome sights. I saw a corpse actually with an eye-ball and the whole brain blown out. I heard a dying man gasping "Hindu Mussalman ki Jai". A boy of 16 or 17 years of age lay wounded with his entrails protruding, having been hit on the belly. When Dr. Dhanpat Rai Salaria and I approached him, he whispered : "I am dying, attend to my brethren. "Hindu-Mussalman ki Jai". The next moment he died. Many similar instances of notable sacrifice I noticed when I was pouring water into the mouths of the dying."

One word more and I will have finished this part of my address. It has been pointed out to me by well meaning friends that in supporting the Muslim claim for the maintenance of the Turkish Empire, I am advocating Imperialism to which I am otherwise so bitterly opposed. Well, Ladies and Gentlemen, I do desire the destruction of Imperialism but I do not desire the destruction of some Empires for the benefit of others. In my judgment, Imperialism should be eliminated from the affairs of men and federation of sisterly states should take its place, but so long as there are Empires, it is not in the interests of humanity that some of them should be dissolved for the enlargement and glorification of others. In the present state of world politics, the liberty of such states as are now being created by the dissolution of the Turkish Empire is not worth even a day's purchase. Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia are being

absorbed in the British and French Empires. Arabia and Kurdistan and Armenia cannot but be vassal States. Turkey itself, under the Treaty, is hardly in a better position than the Nizam of Hyderabad. In an unguarded moment Lloyd George has said : "We have got Constantinople. We have got Mesopotamia. We have got Palestine." The Allies would have been perfectly justified in insisting on establishing autonomous governments in all the component parts of the Turkish Empire, with a tie of federation joining them all for purposes of defence. But as the matter at present stands, Muslim independence is entirely gone. What Arabia, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Syria, Kurdistan and Anatolia are getting is only a shadow and not the substance.

It is impossible to believe that the British and the French quarrels over the oil of Mosul are all disinterested and in the interest of the Muslim world. France, Italy and Great Britain have just made a treaty defining their economic interests in these territories, without consulting Turkey.

In my judgment the position of the Turks in Anatolia and Constantinople is worse than that of Germans in Germany and of the Austrians in Austria. It cannot be said that the Treaty secures them the sovereignty of Thrace or of the Turkish parts of Empire or of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor. In an article in the *Servant of India*, dated 19th August 1920, our friend Mr. C. F. Andrews has explained the meaning of that sentence. He quotes chapter and verse for the following opinion :

"Furthermore, we have now the fact brought to light, that every other Allied power appears to the British as paramount in Aleppo and Damascus and the Greeks as paramount in Smyrna and Adrianople. All the military defences of Constantinople are in the hands of the British. The Sultan himself, his Vizier, and his Cabinet sign dutifully and unanimously British orders. Recalcitrant officials have been effectively dealt with. Financial control has been taken from the Turkish Government; and the Sultan has been made, not only a prisoner in his own palace, to all intents and purposes, but also practically a pauper and a mendicant, dependent on the hated foreigner for every penny of his income. It is this situation, which has made Europe regard the British military occupation as complete and lasting."

REFORM RULES AND REGULATIONS

It is not my intention to detain you long over the Reform Rules and Regulations. The Parliament has finally passed them and they have already been put into operation. My attitude towards the Reform Scheme may be summed up in one sentence. It was one of partial elation in 1918, it sank into one of depression in 1919, it changed almost into one of despair in 1920. From the frankness that characterised the statements made in the Joint Report of the Secretary of State and Viceroy, I concluded that they meant exactly what they had said. But soon after, the resolution relating to the Arms Act and the Local Self-government and the action of the Government in the matter of admitting Indians into the commissioned ranks of the Indian Army, disillusioned me. Then came the Reform Act, with its reservations and limitations The way in which the Secretary of State has been encumbering Indian finances and sanctioning increase after increase in the salaries and allowances of the Civil and Military service, the rules that have been made for the selection of such Indian Civil Servants as are to be nominated in India, the latest development of policy in regard to Currency, Exchange, Reserve Bills, and last but not the least the tenderness which has been shown in dealing with the culprits in the Punjab tragedy have shattered all my hopes. The Reform Scheme as originally formulated, carried in its bosom the germs of disease. These germs have so fearfully developed since then that Colonel Wedgwood[21] was perfectly justified in arguing that "the people of India think and rightly think, that the rules and regulations and the decisions of the Joint Committee, have whittled down the recommendations of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report and have made the Act, as it is put into operation now, far worse than the recommendation of the original Report led them to expect." Now I must say that in one or two respects the Reform Act has made an improvement on the original scheme, but on the whole it has disappointed the hopes that were raised by the latter. Nor is this any matter for wonder. The Rules and Regulations have been framed by the bureaucracy and represent their mind. The people of India have had very little to say in the drafting of them, and what little they said has gone unheeded. The restrictions imposed on the selection of candidates, the refusal to enfranchise the wage-earning classes and women, the constitution of the territorial constituencies and the almost autocratic powers given to the Governors, have considerably reduced the

value of the Reforms, even such as they were. The distinction between dismissed Government servants and dismissed or suspended lawyers and between rural and urban constituencies is on the face of it absurd. The tenderness shown towards European commercial interests is significant and even more significant is the anxiety to keep out of the Councils the leading victims of Martial Law. In the Punjab, Indian Trade and Commerce remains unrepresented and also the Depressed Classes and the wage-earners. The Rules of procedure are as reactionary as the ingenuity of the bureaucracy could make them. In fact, all round, so far as the Rules and Regulations are concerned, the bureaucracy have won and the Indian people have lost. My friend, Mr. V. J. Patel, has returned to India perhaps sadder and wiser for his troubles[22]. He will, I am, sure, throw much more light on the subject than I can. It has been found that blood is thicker than water. It has happened in this case as it did in the case of the Morley-Minto reforms, and it will continue to be like that, until the people of India make up their minds that what they want is the whole loaf and not merely half of it. I would have no objection to take even the half, provided I was sure that the half offered was not selected by the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy is so adept in the art of mixing and cooking that the half which they propose to retain, contains all the nourishment of the whole leaving the other half worse than chaff. They manage it so skilfully that in the process of doughing they mix many a germ of disease in the half which they propose to let you have. It will be a marvel of good fortune, if with all the distinctions of Hindus, Mussalmans, Sikhs and Christians, of urban and rural, of Brahmans and Non-Brahmans, of residents and non-residents, of British subjects and those of Native States, of military and civil, made in the Rules and Regulations, we are still able to evolve a national spirit which will rise above these differences and consolidate us into one people, with a will to live and prosper as a free nation.

NON-CO-OPERATION

At the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, which sanctioned the convening of this special session, it was proposed by Mr. Gandhi that, as a protest against the Turkish Peace Treaty and the decision of the Government in regard to the Punjab affairs, that Committee should recommend a programme of Non-co-operation to the country. Mr. Gandhi's programme of Non-co-operation includes the boycott of the reformed Councils. The

All-India Congress Committee considered that it was not within its competence to accept this proposition as it was opposed to the Resolution of the Amritsar Congress relating to the Reform Scheme.[23] It did not, at the same time, think it right to dispose of the matter without giving the country, as a whole, an opportunity of pronouncing on it. So it has referred the whole matter to this special session.

The question has since then been widely discussed in the country, on the platform and in the press. The Central Khilafat Committee under the leadership of Mr. Gandhi have already started their campaign of Non-co-operation. Some Provincial Congress Committees have, by majority of votes, accepted the principle of Non-co-operation but have recommended no action, pending the decision of this assembly. The question is very much agitating the public mind and has divided the country into two opposing camps. On both sides are ranged revered and respected leaders. Much feeling has been imported into the discussion. Under the circumstances, I have decided that, as President of this assembly, the proper course for me at this stage is to refrain from expressing any opinion on this subject.

I am aware that in the past Presidents have generally discussed all important political questions of the day in their presidental addresses, but then until very recently the country was practically unanimous on all questions which the Congress was expected to deal with.

On the other hand, I believe there is an unwritten tradition that the Congress President, as the spokesman of the country, is expected to deal only with questions on which the country is unanimous or almost unanimous. There is a great deal of wisdom in that tradition. If the Congress is to maintain its character as a National Assembly, those who are selected for the office of the President must not be partisans in the ordinary sense of the term. Whatever his personal opinions, the President cannot be speaking for, and in the name of the country, if he makes a pronouncement on which the country is not unanimous. If his views do not happen to coincide with those of the majority, both he and the Congress would find the situation rather awkward. The President should not try to anticipate the decision of the Congress on a question on which the country is so sharply divided, as it is on the question before us

I, therefore, think that the best interests, of the country and the traditions of the high office to which you have elected me, require that for the present, and in this address, I should say nothing on this much-debated question. In deciding to do so, I am adopting a course which, in my judgment, will enable you hereafter to maintain the national character of this assembly, and which will also have the additional merit of not narrowing the field from which to select your future Presidents. In these days of active political life, when every new day the country may be expected to be confronted with problems on which there is room for differences of opinion among the best and the most respected of the country's leaders, you cannot afford to select your Presidents from amongst men who have kept aloof from active political life. No person who is actively interested in the political life of his country can possibly remain neutral on any important questions on the merest chance of being called upon to preside over a session of the Congress. Nor would such an office-seeker be worthy of this high office. The Congress Presidents must continue to be selected, as far as possible, from among men who have been in the forefront of the political life of the country. It should not be difficult for many among them, to be absolutely impartial when presiding over discussions of controversial subjects, in spite of their having their own personal opinions one way or the other.

In my humble judgment, the President of the Indian National Congress is the mouth-piece of the country only on questions on which the country is unanimous or practically unanimous. Acting on this principle, the moment I decided to accept the honour to which I was called by the vote of the All-India Congress Committee, I made up my mind to follow this course. Since then I have devoted much thought to it but I have not seen any reason to change my opinion. I hope and trust that my decision will meet with your approval. I have my personal opinion on the questions involved in the programme of Non-co-operation but during the session of the Congress I will conduct the proceedings without taking sides.

This, however, does not prevent me from making some general observations on the subject. Before we consider Non-co-operation let us start with co-operation. Co-operation of the people with the Government is based on one of the two assumptions, either that the Government represents them, or that the Government is there to

protect their interests. Now in India the first of these two assumptions cannot hold good. The second is unhappily in the course of being shatterd to pieces, if not already gone. Co-operation with Government, again, is of two kinds ; one enforceable by law and, therefore, compulsory, for example the payment of taxes, or serving the army under conscription ; the other is voluntary, for example accepting Government service or joining the Councils and so. In the case of the former, every refusal is punishable. As for the latter, there again you have to distinguish between co-operation which is obviously for the country's benefit and that which is not so. Co-operation determined solely or mainly by economic considerations can only be refused, if we can find economic alternatives. Co-operation inspired by the considerations of honour and dignity can be easily refused if the mentality of the people regarding honour and dignity can be changed. Last, but not the least, in the same class you may consider co-operation which gives you opportunities of serving your country by attacking the citadels of power and privilege from the inside.

Co-operation or refusal of it, then, must be judged by (*a*) its obligatory or voluntary nature (*b*) by its economic consequences, (*c*) by its inherent morality and (*d*) by its utility as a weapon of attack or defence.

Co-operation which is immoral or which makes you a tool of a foreign bureaucracy or which leaves you no option but to give effect to their orders, stands on an entirely different footing from one which is obviously for the benefit of the country. Similarly co-operation, which is inspired by economic necessity stands on a different footing from the one which is solely or mainly based on considerations of honour and dignity. Then again you must consider if your refusal of co-operation proceeds from the desire to make an immediate effective impression on the Government or from the motive of habituating the people to take their destiny in their own hands.

These, then, are the issues involved in the great question of Non-co-operation.

With your permission, I may also sound a general note of warning. We are passing through critical times. The minds of men are in ferment not only in this country of ours, but all over the world. Ideals, ideas, principles, convictions, sentiments, opinions, beliefs,

creeds and all things, for which men have so far lived and fought are in the melting pot. Democracy is in the air but not that democracy which has brought the old world near its end in one great war. We are promised a new kind of democracy which would make no distinctions of colour, creed, caste, civilisation or culture. It would recognise no barrier between men and men which are the outcome of artificial social distinctions. It aims to raise the dignity of *man* as such. Under the circumstances, it is our duty to take into consideration more than we ever did before, the interests of those who are for the present mere men and women, with no adjectives or prefixes before their names to enable them either to vote for the legislative assemblies of the country or to exercise any other political right, giving them a voice in the determination of their destinies. These men and women have begun to think, not that they did not think before. Thank God, the masses of this country have never been unthinking animals. But what they used to think of before is different from what they are thinking now. In one word, they have begun to think politically. Bitter experience, economic want, Rowlatt Bills and the Martial Law orders, have indeed not only taught them to think politically but also to think vigorously. They feel and realise more keenly and more actively than they perhaps ever did before, the difference between politically free men and those that are not so. In certain respects they are already ahead of those who are supposed to have a stake in the country. They feel that the men without property have a greater and more real stake in the country than men with property. The latter can go and settle and live wherever they like. The whole world is open to them. They are perfectly welcome in every civilised country. But the former can go nowhere except as indentured coolies or as mercenary soldiers, privileges of which they are already quite sick. They want their country for themselves and they are keen on getting it as soon as circumstances permit. Under the circumstances, let me beg of you to think well before you decide the momentous question before you. Whatever you decide, be prepared to act up to your decision regardless of the consequences to your personal interest. Let not your decisions be vitiated by considerations of personal or class interests.

THE MASSES

The general public, including the masses, are in no mood to

be trifled with either by the Government or by yourselves. They have waited sufficiently long, and they want immediate relief from economic want and from political bondage. They may not understand complicated questions of Finance, Currency, Military organisation, or the like. They may not be able to express opinions on abstract theories of State, but they do know that the country at present is not being governed in their interests. They are quite aware of the supercilious claims that are being put forward by British statesmen of all kinds from the O'Dwyers, Sydenhams and Sumners of the Tory school to the Mestons, MacDonnels and Montagus of the democratic wing, that the British can and do look after the interests of the masses of this country even better than their educated countrymen. They know that when the question arises whether vote should be given to "the man on the soil, the man behind the plough, and the man whose life is a question between a crop and a crop" it is the British statesman who stands between them and their right. They know also that when the question arises of how best to spend the revenue raised from them, the people whose interests get precedence over theirs, are the British Civilian, the British Army man, the British manufacturer, the British banker and the British trader. They have seen through the newspapers how lavishly and generously the British Secretary of State has been solicitous of conciliating the British and the allied highly paid Indian servants of the Crown by giving them large increments in the princely salaries which they are already enjoying. While the British Government readily recognises that the man drawing from Rs. 500 to Rs. 3,000 or 4,000 a month is hard hit by the increase in the cost of living, they shut their eyes to the fact that the said increase has cut the very ground from under the feet of ordinary wage-earner, the small agriculturist and the low-paid clerk. Last, but not the least, they have seen that, however tyrannical and oppressive the conduct of a British or Indian officer may be, the greatest punishment that can be meted out to him is to be compulsorily retired on a pension, a punishment which really falls on the tax-payer.

Just imagine, Ladies and Gentlemen, the inequity of the fact that the Indian tax-payer, whose women were insulted, whose crops were ruined, whose sons were flogged, who in his own person, or in that of his relatives or countrymen was humiliated, imprisoned and trodden under foot, is being made to pay for the comfortable living

in Great Britain of a Michael O'Dwyer and Bosworth Smith. The other day, when I mentioned Bosworth Smith to a senior Punjab Civilian, he said, "that fellow was mad". Yet this same mad man not only ruled districts as big in size perhaps as Wales for a number of years, but still is to be a burden on the Indian revenue.

Believe me, Ladies and Gentlemen, the masses of this country are feeling the hardship of the present system of administration even more keenly than the educated Indian. I do not wish to be an alarmist but let me tell you quite frankly that if the Government and the more comfortably placed among ourselves do not desire a revolution, they have to do something tangible, material and substantial, to remove these impressions and do it quick. The persecution of a few educated leaders will only make the situation worse. Educated leaders, on the whole, exercise a restraining influence. Remove that influence as was done by deporting Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal[24] and the consequences will be disastrous.

The recent appointments of Lord Sinha and Mr. Sharma and Dr. Sapru, are excellent in themselves.[25] I may even congratulate these gentlemen on their good luck and the Government on their wisdom but as remedies for the existing discontent they are hopelessly inadequate. A few years before, they might have thrilled our imagination but coming after the Punjab tragedy, they have naturally fallen flat. What people want are not appointments but the power to make them. As nominees of Mr. Montagu upon the people Lord Sinha and Messrs. Shafi, Sharma and Sapru, are the servants of the British Ministry and not of the Indian people. We have every reason to be happy that some of our countrymen will share the loaves and fishes that were so far reserved only for the Britishers. We are also happy that they will have opportunities of serving their country in positions of responsibility and we are confident that they will discharge their duties very well and possibly to the credit of their country. All that may be true, yet we cannot help feeling that they are not the servants of the people of India, but their masters. Ladies and Gentlemen, what we want are not masters, imposed from without, but servants selected and honoured from within. The fact that Lord Sinha might get a salary of a lakh of rupees or more, or that our other friends might get salaries of Rs. 80,000 or so does not make us forget that about forty per cent. of the Indian revenues are spent on the maintenance of an army

which is being used for aggressive Imperial purposes, that millions of our countrymen and countrywomen are denied the ordinary amenities of human life and that they are being ruled by many who share the sentiments of O'Dwyer and Bosworth Smith.

Whatever you decide, remember these facts. The greatest need of the situation is the uplift of the masses, educational, social, as well as economical. Co-operation or Non-co-operation, that must be our aim and purpose and that must be our motive and inspiration. The masses must feel that we are working for them, and in their interests.

This leads me to another point. How far we must lead or be led by the masses ? During the last six months since I landed on the 20th February last, I have been in close touch with the masses of my countrymen. I have seen them in their thousands, in processions, at meetings and have met their representatives in private. I have seen their political awakening. It has exceeded my wildest expectations. Under the circumstances, we have to remember that in any programme we make, we must carry the masses along with us. While it will be wrong on our part to allow our deliberate judgment to be over-ruled by the masses, it will be equally unwise and perhaps fatal to ignore them. There are some worthy men who are disposed to confound the people with mobs ; they believe that true leadership requires the disregard of the opinions and wishes of the people. With due respect to them I have no hesitation in saying that I do not share their belief. The masses change their character into mobs when they are inflamed by passion and anger, and are filled with a desire for revenge and as a rule this happens only under grave provocation. In that situation it becomes the duty of the leaders to be firm and save the situation by tact and skill. (The Punjab leaders at Lahore, Amritsar, Gujranwala and Kasur tried to do this and would, I verily believe, have saved the situation but for the meddling and blundering of the bureaucracy who were out for producing a moral effect. The situation at Delhi was actually saved by the tactful leadership of Swami Shraddhanand and the equally wise behaviour of the Chief Commissioner. Such, however, are exceptional occasions). Under ordinary circumstances wise leadership involves understanding of the mass mind in a spirit of sympathy and respect. There may be occasions when majority or no majority, one has to go by the voice of one's own conscience

but in practical politics such occasions are not frequent nor many. I will, therefore, beg of my fellow Congressmen to bear these considerations in mind when deciding the question before them. We must arrive at a conclusion satisfactory to the general body of our countrymen in whose interests and for whose welfare we are striving. We must not lose the lead of the people either by marching too far ahead of them, or by lagging behind. Both will be fatal to the best interests of the country.

In their present mood, the masses demand that we shall do something over and above the mere passing of resolutions. But I believe they want also that we shall not lose such opportunities of alleviating their condition and helping them in their little things, as we possess or which the law allows us.

DESPOTISM OF A DEMOCRACY WORSE THAN THAT OF A MONARCH

Ladies and Gentlemen, before I conclude, let me submit for your consideration one more thought. There is no such thing as benevolence in international politics, although there is such a thing as enlightened self-interest. The despotism of a democracy is in my judgment more fatal for subject people than that of an absolute monarch. The situation which you have to face is from this point of view more difficult and complex than the one your ancestors had to face even under the despotism of an Aurangzeb.

I would, therefore, very much like to warn my countrymen against being under any delusion as to the justice-loving nature or high-mindedness of any democracy in the world, British or other. I was in this matter disillusioned by my first visit to England in 1905. Since then I have had many opportunities of studying the nature and the character of several democracies (British, American and Japanese) and you may take it from me, that although there are men and women in these democracies who are absolutely just and high-minded, guided by the purest of motives in dealing with subject peoples and backward races, the bulk of them, be they of England or of America, not to speak of Japan, know only one thing, namely, their own interest or the interest of their race. There are sections of these democracies whose own class interests require the destruction of militarism and imperialism and who will, therefore, sympathise with those of the subject people who are struggling for emancipation. It is wise on your part to ally yourselves with them. But place no

faith in the professions of those who, however liberal, worship at the shrine of Imperialism. The recent Parliamentary debate on the Punjab affairs ought to dispel all illusions if there were any still left, on that score. The Imperialist Liberals in the House of Commons with a few noble exceptions, showed no sympathy for the sufferings of the Punjabees, in spite of the eloquent pleadings of men like Mr. T. J. Bennet, Colonel Wedgwood and Mr. Ben Spoor. Liberals in the House of Lords were among the most violent supporters of the military rule. It was a sight for the gods to see. Lords Curzon, Milner and Birkenhead pleading for conciliation and Lords Ampthill and MacDonnel supporting brute force.

Have as many friends as you can have, among Englishmen and others, but have faith in yourselves alone.

It is much better to go rather slowly than deluded by promises held out to us by people who are not in a position to fulfil those promises, or who do not mean what they say or who promise in diplomatic language. Our progress depends more than anything else upon the volume and vigour of our own public opinion in this country. It will be wise to have this supplemented by the moral support of the great nations of the world, since by virtue of being a member of the League of Nations, we can now legitimately appeal to them for such moral support.

Our success will be determined by the extent of our earnestness, the spirit of self-sacrifice in the leaders, the spirit of self-denial in the rank and file, the power to lead righteously and to be led by righteous men. The time has come when we must decide between the freedom of body and soul and the life of convenience and comparative ease which is allowed to a few of us under the present system. If we decide former we must be prepared for the consequences. But if we choose the latter we must not cry if we do not get the moon. That is the real issue before you and I know I can leave this issue with confidence in your hands.

5. TRADE UNION MOVEMENT ON ALL-INDIA BASIS

PERMIT ME to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the honour you have done me by asking me to preside over this first session of the All-India Trade Union Congress. It is a unique occasion, the first of its kind even in the history of this ancient country of ours. In her long history extending over thousands of years, India has surely seen many a great gathering in which parts of this vast sub-continent and all classes of its population were represented, gatherings at which were discussed and settled important and nice questions of religion, philosophy, grammar, law and politics, gatherings at which crowns were bestowed, gatherings in which foreign scholars and foreign ambassadors and foreign diplomats took part. But history records no instance of an assemblage that was convened solely to consider the interests and welfare of workers not of this city or that, not of this province or that, but of Bharat Varsha as a whole. Even under British rule we have had All-India gatherings of various kinds, political, religious, social, literary, scientific, etc. but never an All-India meeting of the workers of country or one where people assembled to consider the interests and the present and future welfare of the workers as such. This by itself should show, if there was nothing else to remind us of the fact that India of today is very different from India of ancient and medieval times, nay even from India of yesterday. We are living in an age quite different from anything that the world has seen or known before. That being so, the problems that face and the questions that confront us are, from the very nature of things, of a different kind from those that confronted our immediate and remote ancestors. This fact whether we like it or not, has to be recognised.

This is the full text of the Presidential Address of Lala Lajpat Rai to the First All-India Trade Union Congress, held at Empire Theatre, Bombay, on 7 November 1920.

Then there is another fact also which receives scant attention from those who profess to guide the destinies of this great nation viz. that we are living in times, in which no nation can live an isolated life of its own. Whatever happens in the world outside of our shores affects us in our daily life very closely and intimately. It makes our food dearer, our clothing more costly, our possession more or less valuable and similarly affects other relations of life deeply. In the same way whatever happens in our country affects the outside world also, equally deeply and intimately. This is not limited to any single sphere of life but is virtually true of almost all spheres but particularly so of the political and economic. So, whether we like it or not, we are a part and parcel of the modern world. This modern world is characteristically a world of machinery, of steam, gas and electricity. This is a world of mass production, of organised capital, organised industry and organised labour. Organised mass production involves the organisation of capital, and the organisation of labour on a scale never heard of before. So far organised capital has had its way. It has ruled the world for the last 150 years, and the world today is groaning under its burden. It has destroyed many an old civilisation, enslaved religion, chained science and placed in bondage all the forces of nature and human intellect. Humanity is its bond slave. Old China with its four to five hundred millions of industrious, hardworking and art-loving people with its ancient culture, science and art has been broken on the wheel and thrown to the wolves. India with its hoary civilisation, its mighty spiritualism, its great philosophy, and its beautiful art, with a family consisting of one fifth of the whole human race, has also been bled white by the forces of organised capital and is today lying prostrate at its feet. Militarism and Imperialism are the twin-children of capitalism ; they are one in three and three in one. Their shadow, their fruit and their bark—all are poisonous. It is only lately that an antidote has been discovered and that antidote is organised labour.

We in India have been rather slow to find and apply this antidote. The reasons are obvious. We were politically impotent and economically helpless. Our political impotence has made us a nation of Pariahs in relation to the rest of the world. Our masters use us to conquer and police the world for their benefit and glorification. They also used us to develop their colonies, cultivate their

fields, operate their mines, man their industries and increase their wealth. By way of adding insult to injury they maligned our religion, caricatured our culture, and painted us so black as to be considered unfit for being accepted as equals or even as men by the so-called civilised races of the world. In the eyes of the latter, we are a nation of coolies, inferior in everything that distinguishes a mere animal from men. This was a trick by which organised British capital managed to create a prejudice against us in the minds of the white workers of Europe, America and Africa. It was necessary for their purpose. Any bond of brotherhood, or of mutual interest between the workers of Europe and America, on the one hand, and those of Asia on the other would have destroyed the spell by the force of which they exploited and sweated both. To the workers of Manchester, was always presented the bug bear of the cheap labour of India. We in India were kept in fear of the competition of Manchester. The war, however, has broken the spell. The workers of Europe and America have now discovered that the cause of workers is one and the same all the world over, and that there can be no salvation for them unless and until the workers of Asia were organised, and internationally affiliated. Labour in Europe threatens to turn the tables over their masters, the employers, and they recognise that the success of their movement demands a close association of European workers with the workers of Asia. So long as there is cheap labour in China and India, and so long as India is helpless to keep out foreign capital, and to prevent the latter using Indian and Chinese labour to the detriment of the European workers, the cause of the European proletariat is neither safe nor secure. The movement we are inaugurating today is thus of more than national importance. It is a matter of international significance. The workers of India are joining hands and brains not only to solidify the interests of Indian labour, but also to forge a link in the chain of international brotherhood. The future is on the laps of gods and prophecy is unsafe but it may be safely predicted that the success of the movement to which we are giving birth today may eventually turn out to be an event of world importance.

The Trade Union Movement in this country is yet in its infancy and it may be said that an All-India Trade Union Congress is rather premature. In my humble judgment, it has not come a day too soon. Labour in India suffers from very many drawbacks and the

prejudices against it are too many and varied in nature. Depressed by religio-social ideals of by-gone ages, looked down upon by prevailing standards of literary education, deprived even of elementary knowledge by the extravagant wastefulness and jealousy of a foreign bureaucracy, placed in a condition of abject dependence by the military exigencies of a capitalistic autocracy, kept apart by the artfulness of resourceful despotism, labour in this country is in greater need of joint action, and of freedom from provincial and district rivalries than anywhere else. District organisations cannot be effective unless they are protected from the rivalry of men from the other districts. For this purpose are needed provincial organisations but even provincial organisations will not do unless we have an All-India organisation to protect labour from provincial rivalries.

The two employers of labour in our country are, the Government and the private capitalist. The Government also is in its own way a big capitalist. The Departments of Railways, Post Office, Telegraph and Channels and others are capitalistic and more or less commercial concerns. Both these classes of employers have All-India resources at their disposal. Handicapped as labour is in many other respects, labour also must have an All-India organisation and an All-India propaganda to meet its opponent on equal ground.

The Government of this country is wasteful and extravagant in the salaries and allowances it allows to its higher service. It would be bankrupt if it met the demands of the subordinate services and lowest rank of its employees also in the same spirit. Consequently to avoid bankruptcy, it sweats its lowest service in a way perhaps no other Government on the face of the earth does. There is no country in the world which pays its higher civil and military service anything like the salaries the Government of India does. In the whole of the United States there is only one man who gets more than 35,000 Rupess per annum, and that is the President of the United States. In Japan, even the Prime Minister does not get that amount. In India, there are dozens, mostly Englishmen, who get more than that amount. Compare the salaries post by post, and you will find the standard extravagantly higher in India while the living even now is comparatively cheaper. Yet within the last two or three years the Government has sanctioned enormous increases in these salaries. The worst feature of this situation, however, is the extreme disparity that exists between the

salaries of the lowest services and those of the highest. The difference between maximum and minimum salaries in the United States and Great Britain on the one hand, and India on the other is simply startling. In the United States, the lowest salary allowed to a clerk or a porter in government office is from about 1,000 to 1,200 dollars a year, and the highest allowed to a cabinet minister is 12,000. In India, a cabinet minister gets Rs. 80,000 a year besides allowances while his orderly gets only 120 a year or at the most 180. In calculating the needs of a civil servant, the Government of India shows a great deal of generosity, provides for the education of his children, for the luxury of travelling to and from Europe, and secures him a high standard of comfort in India. But when it enters into calculation ascertaining the proper salary of a postman or a telegraph peon or an orderly or a railway porter or signaller, it not only disregards all these considerations, but is mean enough to bring into account the earnings of his wife and his minor children. Such is the difference between man and man in the eyes of this Christian Government. That there is difference between work and work, between mere manual work and skilled work, may be assumed but is the difference so great as to justify this disparity between the economic needs of one from the other ? To fight against such a system of inhuman inequalities the workers of India, whether in Government or in private employ, require an All-India organisation to help each other by mutual sympathy, counsel and aid.

Again, there is another danger ahead against which workers in India must provide. We are often told that in order successfully to compete with Manchester and Japan, Capital in India should be allowed a high rate of profit and cheap labour is a necessity for the purpose. The interests of Indian industries, they say, require that labour in this country should be plentiful and cheap. There may be something in that argument, but the way in which it is represented in season and out of season carries it too far. We are not prepared to admit the validity of this plea. Under the shelter of nationalism European capitalists have created sufficient havoc in the world, and we are not prepared to listen with equanimity to that cry being overdue in India. An appeal to patriotism must affect the rich and the poor alike, in fact, the rich more than the poor. If the development of the Indian industries requires the organisation of Indian capital, it still more requires the organisation of Indian labour. Labour and

capital must meet on equal ground and join hands to develop Indian industries. As at present neither the Government nor the capitalist is disposed to treat the worker, fairly and equally. The former sacrifices him at the altar of princely salaries for a higher rank of the European and Indian services and also for the exigencies of militarism. The capitalist wants to sweat him for his hundred or two hundred per cent. profit. Surely, that is not the way to develop Indian industries if it is to be done at the expense of labour alone. I maintain, therefore, that it has become absolutely necessary for Indian labour to organise itself on national lines in order to be able to negotiate with their employers on equal terms and with due regard to national interests. I refuse to admit that the interests of Indian industries must in every case, over-ride the human needs of workers. In all discussion about the demands and rights of labour in India, labour is still treated as a commodity to be sold and purchased in open market. In every discussion it is the interests of industry that are held supreme. The question asked is "will the industry bear it". The proper question in my judgment should be "how can the industry be made to bear it consistently with the minimum human requirements of the worker and his family, on the standard of a moderately comfortable healthy life for him and his children, a provision for the education of the latter and for the rainy day". The Indian capitalists must meet labour half way and must come to an understanding with it on the basis of sharing the profits in a reasonable and just proportion. It must be made worth the while of labour to co-operate with the capitalist to advance and develop Indian industries. If however, Indian capital wants to ignore the needs of labour and can think only of its huge profits, it should expect no response from labour and no sympathy from the general public. If labour must remain half starved, ill-clothed, badly housed and destitute of education, it can possibly have no interest in the development of Indian industries, and all appeals in the name of patriotism must fail. On these grounds and several others it is desirable that Indian labour should lose no time to organise itself on a national scale. "Capital is organised on a world-wide basis ; it is backed up by a financial and political strength beyond conception ; its weapons are less perishable than those employed by labour, it presents dangers which apply universally." In order to meet these dangers, Indian labour will have to join hands with labour outside India also, but its first duty is to organise itself at home. The most important business then

before this Congress is, to bring into existence a central organisation which would protect the interests of Labour all over India. The organisation cannot be perfected without bringing all the Unions in India into its orbit of influence. But a beginning can certainly be made with as many organisations as are willing to join hands at once. Those who are pioneers must exercise patience, tolerate criticism, and show readiness to subordinate their individual opinions and predilections to the interests of the general body of workers, in such a way as to convince those that are hesitating and faltering, of their sincerity and earnestness. It is easy to criticise, it is sometimes convenient to stay out, till the pioneers have cleared the field and borne the brunt of opposition. It is even prudent to take no risks involved in going ahead with a movement of this kind. But it is neither manly nor patriotic to do so. Anyway the pioneers must proceed in a spirit of brotherhood, working for all, in the interests of all, and always willing to share the gains with all.

The other important business before the Congress will be to consider resolutions of the International Labour Conference, created by the League of Nations, which held its first sittings at Washington D.C. in November, 1919, and to express its considered opinion relating thereto.[1] The Congress will also have to select its accredited representatives to represent them in the coming conference, and to place its views before that body. Our past experience is that the Government of India, however well-intentioned some of its individual officers and statesmen may be, is, because of its constitution, capitalistic in its sympathies and outlook. It protects further the interests of British capital in the first instance, and then proceeds to help Indian capital, so far as the latter does not encroach on the preserves of the former. Its professed concern for labour and for the poor is rarely translated into deeds. It is well illustrated today by its attitude towards the lowest among its servants, its continued unashamed tolerence of forced labour, half-hearted sympathy for Indian labour in colonies and by its indifference towards the education of the labourer and his children. The Government of India will do nothing substantial for the Indian people, the vast bulk of whom are labourers in the field and factory, unless and until it is compelled to do so by the force of circumstances. In bringing about these circumstances, Indian labour must play its part and secure the sympathy of international labour. It is therefore of vital importance that Indian labour should cultivate the most friendly relations with European

labour without necessarily adopting all the items in the plank of the latter.

While it is true that the interests of labour are the same all the world over, it is equally true that the power of labour in each country is limited by local national circumstances. Labour in Europe is in a position to dictate. European workman has found out, that to depend for the enforcement of his right and the amelioration of his condition on the political action of persons who owe their legislative power and position, to the vote of the men of property, is absurd and unnatural. In order to protect the interests of himself and his class, the workman must have a vote and he must give it to a man of his class or to a man pledged to his interests. So every workman in Europe is a political unit. Over and above this European labour has found another weapon in direct action. On the top comes the Russian worker, who aims to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. We in India, have not yet reached even the first stage. The Government have not yet given us votes and as at present situated they will oppose us at every step. They will not even hesitate to use all the forces of militarism at their command, to crush our efforts towards united action, and to keep us disunited, disorganised and out of touch with world affairs. They have illustrated this by their action in the matter of the Lahore Railway strike, the Government Press strike at Calcutta and Simla and the Postal and Telegraph strike at Bombay. Their recent action in prohibiting the importation of "Soviet Russia" and the "Daily Herald" of London is also an illustration to the point. While the Anglo-Indian Press is engaged day and night in disseminating palpable lies about Soviet Russia, the Government of India steps in, to prevent the people of India from knowing the other side of the story. Truth in Europe is of two kinds :

(a) Capitalistic and Governmental truth represented by men like Mr. Winston Churchill, and papers like the "London Times" and the "Morning Post".

(b) Socialistic and Labour truth represented by labour organs of the type of "Justice", "Daily Herald" and "Soviet Russia".

The Government of India wants us to swallow the first kind of truth without knowing the other side. Unfortunately for us

truth is no longer truth. It is qualified by capitalism and imperialism on the one hand and socialism on the other. It is either capitalistic or bourgeois socialistic. In order to know the whole truth one has to know all the three brands and then use his judgement. My own experience of Europe and America leads me to think that socialistic, even Bolshevic, truth is any day better, more reliable and more human, than the capitalistic and imperialistic truth. The Anglo-Indian Press takes its cue from the latter, now-a-days it divides its attention between Bolshevism and Gandhism. It stoops to anything, when it sits to misrepresent, malign and discredit. It is helped in that nefarious work by the action of the Government. Whatever may be the case of the Government against "Soviet Russia", its action against "Justice" and "Daily Herald", both British publications, is absolutely arbitrary, unjust and provoking. The people of India are not babies who require protection against the kind of mental and moral food supplied by the labour publication of Great Britain. The experience of the few strikes, we have had in Bombay, Madras, Lahore and Calcutta, proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that our workers are much more disciplined, and self-controlled than the corresponding ranks of labour in Great Britain, United States, France or Germany. In Lahore 50,000 railwaymen kept up a strike for about seven weeks without having one case of violence, or injury to the property, against them. Even the capitalists admired their manner and method. The people of India are probably the most law abiding people on earth, and if any Government uses any repression against them it only betrays its own weakness. What makes the people of India law abiding is not the existence of fear or coercive laws, but their own innate and inborn gentleness and goodness. There must be something rotten in the constitution and nature of a Government which needs Martial Law and military terrorism to keep such people in hand and to preserve order among them. The action of the Government of India in preventing access to the people of India to the socialistic and labour thought of the world is the least justifiable of all its repressive actions and should be unreservedly condemned.

There is no one in India who believes that the European and Russian standards of labour can be applied to India of today. If there were any, I would remind him or them of the message of

Lenin to Bela Kun[2] wherein the former warned the latter against the danger of applying Russian standard to Hungary prematurely. For the present our greatest need in this country, is to organise, agitate, and educate. We must organise our workers, make them conscious, and educate them in the ways and interests of commonweal. I do not believe in freedom by steps or by stages but at the same time I do not believe in denying the facts of life and shutting our eyes to the circumstances under which we live. If one is both chained and hand-cuffed, one can break his hand-cuffs and yet not be free. Labour in this country has many fetters to break through. They will require time and energy, application and organisation, self-discipline and self-control. But they will not be free unless all the fetters are broken and thrown asunder. For this purpose all concerned in the welfare of labour will have to work hard and in a spirit of sacrifice and co-operation. This spirit of sacrifice should particularly characterise the efforts of such brain workers in the ranks of the labour, who are educated enough to lead the movement. Those who are not strictly wage-earners but who feel for labour will have to give their time, talent, and money for the improvement of the wage-earners' lot. The Government and the Capitalist will both try to discredit them, but they must stand by the faith in them, and ungrudgingly give the best in them to the cause of labour which is the cause of humanity. Pretending to protect the interests of labour, the Government does not like interference of those who are not actually wage-earners themselves in the organisation of the labour, because they know that unorganised, illiterate, and unskilled labour is incompetent to fight its own battles and can easily be made to yield in negotiations between them and their educated, resourceful and wide-awake opponents. The workmen should not fall into this trap. For some time to come they need all the help and guidance and co-operation they can get from such among the intellectuals as are prepared to espouse their cause. Eventually labour shall find its leaders from its own ranks.

I do not think I should detain you, Ladies and Gentlemen, more than a minute. In this minute I want to explain our attitude towards Government. It is neither one of support nor that of opposition. We will welcome every effort by Government to improve the cause of labour and help to organise and establish

themselves on a basis of self-reliance. I have already explained that we cannot expect much from the Government as constituted at present, and I fear that we cannot place much reliance upon it. But there may be individual statesmen to whom we may appeal in emergencies for mediation between the Capitalist and Labour. But the question is who is going to mediate between the Government and its own servants where the question of the improvement of the latter's lot is involved and the Government is unwilling to do so, on a proper scale. The situation becomes very different under these circumstances. We will have to find a *modus operandi* to relieve it. With these words I will again thank you for the honour you have done me and for the patience with which you have heard me.

6. NON-CO-OPERATION MOVEMENT

I AM IN a position to congratulate the drafters of this resolution upon its present form. In my judgment it is much more comprehensive, much more effective and much more practical than the language of the old resolution[1] was without in any way taking away from its strength. In its present form it is much more strong, it removes all the objections that the objectors had against it in its old form without in any way weakening it in its essentials. It is much more comprehensive, and you will see from the language of the different parts of it that it is much more practical because it gives a direct lead to the country how to proceed with the business of Non-co-operation. Under the previous resolution, you remember, the All India Congress Committee had to appoint a Sub-Committee to give detailed instructions as to how to carry out that resolution, and in giving those instructions there was unfortunately a slight difference of opinion between people who drafted that report. All that has been removed by the language of the present resolution, There are clear indications, how the nation is to proceed as to the boycott of foreign goods, absolutely clear indications, and no one who reads this resolution can bring a charge against us that although we have passed the resolution we are not carrying it out in practice or in our actual life. That charge can no longer be brought against us with the resolution in its present form. As regards schools and colleges the wording has been so very well drafted now that it leaves absolutely no doubt as to the essential parts of the resolution, and I wish to submit that so far as the intentions of the mover of the resolution and the principal speakers are concerned, those intentions have been made much more clear than weakened in any way.

Speech by Lala Lajpat Rai when supporting the resolution on Non-co-operation at the thirty-fifth session of the Indian National Congress held at Nagpur in December, 1920.

Mahatma Gandhi has from the very first been saying that so far as school children were concerned he did not intend, he did not mean to go over the heads of parents as regards students of under sixteen years of age. He has made it clear in his speeches that he did not want to disturb or undermine the parental authority as regards children under sixteen years of age. As regards school or college children over sixteen years of age he has been saying that he does not want them to come out simply because he asks them to come out, but he wanted them to consult their own conscience and see if the voice of conscience, the call of duty to the motherland, asked them to come out and that they should come out only in that case, and I am in a position to say that with the wording of this resolution I have absolutely no difficulty. Personally, as I told Mahatma Gandhi last evening in order to remove all kinds of possible misapprehension, I might have possibly preferred to leave school children alone, but in the interpretation that he has put and in the light of the new wording of the resolution I have given my consent and support to the present resolution in its present form.

That practically removes all the possible objections, at least so far as I am concerned, which I had to the old resolution, and now I want to recall to you the words which I addressed to you at the special session of the Congress in spite of my difference of opinion with the resolution as it stood then. I told you and I want to repeat to you, that after the resolution has been carried out by this house it becomes our bounden duty to observe it and carry it out in practice so that no one shall say that we pass resolutions and do not give effect to them. It is very unfortunate that some people in the country, very few though, who belonged really to the Congress camp have considered it advisable, or have been bold enough to defy the mandate of the Congress or the wish of the Congress with regard to the Councils. I am sorry for them. I do not question their motives in any way, but still I am here to affirm and to say that the success which the Congress propaganda has achieved in the matter of Council election must be an eye-opener to the bureaucracy. First of all, it is noticeable, and I congratulate my fellow nationalists of all the provinces, that in spite of great differences of opinion, in spite of the fact that a large body of nationalists in Maharashtra, in Bengal and other provinces were opposed to the item of boycott of Councils, as soon as the Indian

National Congress passed that resolution, they manfully and patriotically declared they would abide by the resolution, and did not go to the Councils, I venture to say that no other country in the world can afford to show such an example of absolute obedience to the national constituted authority as the nationalists in India did in obedience to that resolution. I know men, very high in national council, very high in economic positions, who were very keen on going to the Councils and who thought that that was the best way of serving their nation, but within a week, I say deliberately, of the passing of that resolution there was a practical unanimity amongst all nationalist ranks in every part of India to decide to abide by the resolution whatever their personal opinions might be. I am here to congratulate the nation upon that action and upon that conduct, and I am here to point out to the bureaucracy the finger of God in that conduct and in that behaviour. Of course they have been making much, and they have been wishing to make much, of the minor differences between us, but when it comes to a point of principle, when it comes to a point of conduct by which we can show united action they must learn that we have now come to a stage when we can show united front.

Non-co-operation in the matter of Councils has been a perfect success. It has been an absolute success, and I wish that the agitation with regard to the Councils may not stop there, but should be carried to its logical conclusion. The logical conclusion to which it can be carried and it ought to be carried has been embodied in that clause of this resolution which deals with the Council elections. We must continue to ask the voters, those who have been given the franchise, to show by persistent declaration that those men who have gone into the Councils do not represent them. You will be doing a double service to the country by that. You will be practically showing to the Government and to the people that those people who have gone to the Councils in defiance of the national will do not represent the nation. Secondly, you will be practically registering them and enlisting them in your own electorates making your organisation stronger and much more representative and effective. I beg of you when you go back to put forth your greatest effort, as much effort as you are capable of, in regard to that part of the resolution in registering the votes of the voters against those people who have gone to the Councils and in registering their votes in favour of the

new constitution of the Congress and making them a part and parcel of this great assembly so as to make it a really representative and effective national assembly. This is the work to which we have to devote ourselves, and I rejoice in saying that in this resolution the name of Mr. Tilak has been added to give it a more effective support by his life. If the spirit of one after death can look upon their work with greater pleasure and solace and consolation, the spirit of the late Bal Gangadhar Tilak when he reads this resolution will rejoice that the country has taken this step.

I do not want to detain you any longer. I will tell you that not only our honour, the honour of those who are present here and the honour of those who have not been able to come here, not only our own honour, but the fate of the country, the fate of the 315 millions of our countrymen depends upon our being true and loyal and faithful to the spirit of the resolution. We shall be stultifying ourselves in the eyes of the world, we shall be setting an example of extreme demoralisation if in any way we fail to achieve the success that we aim at. It may be that our work is very difficult ; it is very difficult. It may be that it is uphill; it is uphill. It is fraught with serious consequences, but for serious business we must be prepared to take serious consequences, and as the business of getting our emancipation is Swaraj I again rejoice that in the first part of the resolution the first place has been given to Swaraj. I rejoice at that change also, because in my view that is the point that has to be constantly kept in view, that has to be constantly kept in mind, that Swaraj is the final goal, and whatever may be the redress of the grievances that we particularly press upon the attention of the Government, I want you, to continue the struggle unless full Swaraj is obtained and therefore I do not think that too much importance can be attached to that. Subject to these remarks I leave the resolution in your hands confident that you will adopt it without any modifications, without any change or without any alteration.

I wish to add one word. There is a part of that resolution which deals with the police and the soldiery, and I just consulted Mahatma Gandhi, and I am authorised to tell you, it does not mean that so long as any of our countrymen is in the employment of the Government, in the police, or the army, he should be untrue to his oath, he should be in any way false to the obligations and duties

which he has undertaken. If at any time any member of the police or any member of the soldiery feels that any obedience to the orders of his officers involves a violation of his duties to his *dharma*, his creed, and his country, his duty becomes to resign his post and come over to the side of the nationalist service. But so long as there is no reason whatsoever for doing so and he remains in that service, the great assembly of Indians in no way calls upon him to be false to his oath and to fail in the performance of the duties he has undertaken. But this Congress places an obligation upon him which he was in the olden days likely to forget. He should not forget that he is a member of this nation and that he has duties and obligations towards his own people, and therefore what this Congress means by that part of the resolution is to lay emphasis on that part of his duty and to point out to him how he has to perform that duty.

7. CREED OF THE CONGRESS

I HAVE been commissioned to second this proposition in English and I will carry out that commission. I consider this Resolution[1] to be of the greatest importance not only at the present juncture but also for the future of my country.

The Creed of the Congress has a history of its own which, with your permission, I intend to relate in a few words. Most of you who have studied the history of the Indian National Congress know how the split at Surat took place in 1907. I took part in the proceedings of that Congress and I was one of the unfortunate causes that were at that time relied upon, at least superficially, to be at the bottom of that split and therefore I know somewhat how that split came about. One of the fundamental differences at that time between the two parties, since then called the Moderates and Extremists, not all of them but a few of the so-called Extremists, believed that it would only work for the complete independence of India and was not for its retention whithin the British Empire. That was one of the fears that underlay the proceedings that led to that split. After the Convention was created at Surat we met at Allahabad sometime early in 1908[2] to consider the draft of this creed and to pass the constitution. I was present at that time and I am prepared to tell you that even at that time I was opposed to the creed and to the requirement of its being signed before anybody could attend a meeting of the Indian National Congress. My reason of that opposition was this ; not that I believed at that time that we had either the means or the will to work for complete independence or for taking out India from the British Empire, but I thought that none of us had the right to

Speech of Lala Lajpat Rai seconding the resolution on the change in the creed of the Congress at its thirty-fifth session held at Nagpur in December, 1920. The resolution was moved by Mahatma Gandhi.

exclude from the deliberations of this Congress anybody who pitched his ideal so high as the complete independence of his mother country. And I tell you that one chief point for consideration before me was that no assembly in India could be called national which precluded by virtue of this creed a man of the purity and of the ability and of the absolute disinterestedness and high partriotism of the nation as Aurobindo Ghose. That was my reason because I knew there were some friends at that time who were not prepared to sign that creed. However, at that time the public opinion of the country was not in favour of going so far and therefore the creed was passed and adopted. Now about twelve or thirteen years have rolled by, and since many events have happened which practically make it compulsory, almost obligatory, to change the creed, and I am prepared here to say that it could not be changed in a better way than it has been done. I say it is only a development of the policy which was adopted at the last Special Session in passing the resolution on Non-co-operation. After the passing of that resolution on Non-co-operation, you could not certainly exclude from the deliberations of this Congress those people who were not prepared to sign the old creed. Even at the present moment I am not prepared to say that the majority of this assembly or the vast majority of thinking people in the country are prepared to say that we will at once go in for complete independence, or that we are going to fight for it at once, or that we shall not remain within the British Commonwealth, if that were possible for us to do. Gentlemen, I want here to take this opportunity of pointing out that we shall be lacking in frankness, we shall be lacking in patriotism, we shall be lacking in honesty and truth, if we are not to announce in the clearest possible terms the change of mentality that has come over this country. We are here assembled in this Congress not to express our individual views but according to the old traditions of the country to focus public opinion of this country and to place it in the form of a resolution. What does the change in the creed aim at ? A notice to the British public and the British Government that although we do not at the present moment aim, directly aim, to go out of the British Empire, or, what we may call the British Commonwealth, but if we remain in the British Commonwealth or the British Empire we shall not remain at the dictation of anybody or by fear. We shall remain there by our own free choice and free will, and that free choice and free will we can only exercise

and express when we are allowed to do so by legitimate and peaceful means.

There are friends here from the British Isles[3] for whom I have the greatest respect and I want them to convey this message from this assembly to the British people that as a people dealing with another people we are in no way hostile to them. We are not actuated by any motives of enmity or hostility but at the same time we want them to tell their Government that this country has absolutely no faith in the justice-loving instincts of Great Britain. Not only that, but I want it to be said from this platform that we have lost all faith even in the sanity of British statesmanship. I consider British statesmanship, when it sent that despatch on the affairs of the Punjab in which they praised or took upon themselves to pay a tribute of praise to Sir Michael O'Dwyer[4] by those sentences, practically declared its bankruptcy. We want it to be taken from this platform that not only then but even previously we had lost faith in British statesmanship but that was the chief sealing point which has sealed our opinion of British statesmanship and British justice.

The other day I read a telegram in which it was stated that in the House of Lords, Lord Selbourne[5] expressed his resentment at the conduct of those Indians who were disseminating in this country that the British pledges and British words were not to be relied upon. Of course he wanted the Government of India to carry on a counteracting propaganda to meet those charges and to contradict those people who were making those charges. I, in this open Congress, in this assembly of twenty thousand of my countrymen, containing the cream of this country, want to tell Lord Selbourne that we have absolutely no faith in British pledges or British words. I want him to open up the pages of Indian history and he will find that the British rule in India is a continuous record of broken pledges and unfulfilled promises. Does he want us at the present moment to continue to delude ourselves into the good faith of British pledges and British promises ? We do not want to go into the past history or to open up the past record of British connection with India. But I challenge anyone that not a single decade of British rule in India has gone about without a breach of faith and breach of promises and breach of pledges. Pledges made most solemnly in the name of His Majesty, or Her Majesty, promises made clearly, unambiguously

by the responsible Government of Great Britain, have not only remained, most of them, unfulfilled but they have been actually broken. I will not go over past history of how Lord Dalhousie simply swept away those pledges and promises but the recent history is enough to furnish me with instances of those broken pledges. It will be fresh to the memory of my countrymen how Lord Curzon tried to sweep away practically the Queen's Proclamation by saying that it was a piece of rhetoric. Lord Curzon was not an irresponsible politician. He was the Viceroy of India and at the present moment Foreign Secretary of the British Empire. Then we come later on to His Most Excellent, to His Greatest Excellency, the present Prime Minister of England, Mr. Lloyd George. If Lord Selbourne had been present here, I would have asked him to point out to me a single member of the present British Cabinet whose words carry greater weight than those of a grocer. Mr. Lloyd George embodies in himself the chivalry, the nobility and the patriotism and power of the British Empire and we know he deceived the Indian Mussalmans and how he broke those pledges to the heart still maintaining that he had never broken his pledges. I can understand an honest man saying that those pledges were made under stress of necessity and that politics knows no law and therefore they can be broken with impunity. But what about the honesty of a man who says that he has stuck to those pledges while the whole world says that he has broken them to the heart.

Coming down from His Excellency the Prime Minister we shall examine a little the ethical frame of mind of his Excellency, the War Minister. Are we going to place any faith in Mr. Winston Churchill who is spoken of as the future Viceroy of India ? Are we going to place faith in the words of Lord Curzon, Foreign Minister ? Are we going to place faith in the words of Mr. Balfour ? May I ask somebody to point out to me who among the British Cabinet is entitled to our confidence ? Under the circumstances it is absolutely futile for any British statesman to expect that India can place any more faith or any confidence in the words and pledges of British statesmen. But by this change of creed we want to give notice to the British public and British Government that it is our deliberate considered opinion. We are not even now averse to remain within the British Commonwealth, if we are allowed to remain on our terms,

by our free choice and by our free will and we will decide that question, when the time comes, on its merits in the light of our own interests and not by coercion or fear. Ladies and gentlemen, that is a kind of notice, however innocent, however harmless, which we give to the British Nation and the British Government and I tell you we should be false to our country, we should be absolutely failing in our duty, if at the present day we fail to give that clear notice.

To the British people and the British Government, I want to say one word about the play on the words "Empire or Commonwealth." May I ask if there is any British Commonwealth ? Very well. Then where is that British Commonwealth in which we can remain on terms of equality ?

As to the British Empire, I would rather be a slave than willingly consent to be a part of an Empire which enslaves so many millions of human beings. I do not want to share the rights and responsibilities of such an Empire. There are many friends of mine, for whom I have the greatest respect and who are very much revered in this country for their past services, they are not in the Congress now, who are very fond of claiming to be the future partners of this Empire. If they want to be partners in an Empire which is based and founded upon the blood and the loss of liberty and rights of many millions of human beings they may like it but I for one would not like to be in that Empire. It is very flattering, it is very gratifying to some people, it is a high honour to be citizens of such an Empire. First of all, that Empire denies to me the rights and privileges of citizenship. But even if I had that citizenship I would be ashamed of it and never be proud of it. Therefore, I need not dilate very much upon this point. I want to tell you that it is absolutely necessary for us, in the present state of affairs in this country, to be absolutely frank,

Some of my friends say that it is a dubious phrase, 'Swaraj'. If they mean by this that the phrase has two meanings within or without the British Empire, without making it clear, I will say they are right because the word has been deliberately used for the purpose of enabling us to remain within this Commonwealth if we choose when that Commonwealth has been established or go out of it when we like. In that sense that word may be construed to have a double meaning. It has no double meaning but it is a word which leaves

the choice of the two conditions to us. That is the first part of the resolution "Attainment of Swaraj by the people of India".

The other part of the resolution deals with the means. There are some friends here for whom I have great respect, who think that we might have very well omitted any mention of the means. I am afraid I cannot agree with them. The reason is this. I am one of those who believe that every nation has, when the occasion arises, the inherent right of armed rebellion against a repressive, autocratic goverment, but I do not believe that we have either the means or even the will for such an armed rebellion at the present time. I will not discuss the future possibilities but I want that my countrymen should not have any misconception or misgiving about the fact that the leaders of the National Congress do not want them to resort to violence for the attainment of any of the objects which have been laid before them. It is absolutely necessary in the present state of feeling in the country to lay emphasis on that point because passions have been roused, feelings have been excited and there is a very bitter resentment in the minds of the people against the doings of the British Government, and therefore the more we emphasise this point the greater the need of it and the greater the use of it. It cannot be too frequently and too sufficiently emphasised that we entirely abhor and dislike any kind of violence used against individuals or used rather in a fit of passion or anger or resentment.

I want to congratulate my countrymen, in carrying on the very onerous duty, in performing a very difficult task, in connection with the recent elections[6] there have been so few untoward events. Events have happened here and there which we deplore, which we condemn and repudiate but my wonder is that they have been so few and not more. The feeling and excitement, the anger and passion of the country have been so much roused of late that it would be very difficult to control it by any human being. I consider that the country has displayed, on the whole, mark my words, "on the whole", a sobriety and appreciation of the situation for which we may well congratulate ourselves. I want to express that at least in my province with the exception of a few of these untoward events we have within the last six months, within the last one year, in spite of the gravest possible provocation, maintained peace which does great credit to the Punjabees. If ever, therefore, in the future, there is any disturbance

in the Punjab, there is any exhibition of violence, there is any recrudescence of disorder it will not be we who shall be responsible for it, but the British Government. I want to tell the Bureaucracy that if they continue in their policy of repression—cruel uncalled for repression absolutely unjustified in the face of the circumstances—they shall be responsible for the consequences and not any of us.

You will pardon me for this brief reference to the Punjab, particularly because I find that although the same kind of speeches are being delivered all over the country, the same kind of feeling being exhibited and the same kind of language being used all over the country, well, it is the Punjab Government that decides to introduce the Seditious Meetings Act. I believe and I want to say from this platform that without making any reflection upon the personal character of the immediate rulers of the Punjab I think that in the whole of British India there is no administration which is more stupid, which is absolutely more unstatesmanlike and lacking in the quality of statesmanship than the Administration of the Punjab. We, with the help of our friends, of our leaders and countrymen from the other provinces are determined to do our level best to maintain peace in the province, to work on peaceful lines, to go on working as much as we can without giving any reason, any occasion for disturbance or disorders. But if the British Bureaucracy goes on making blunders after blunders, stupid and absolutely unreasonable, we do not know what might happen in that province. They say they want repression in that province because it is full of gunpowder. Who has made it into gunpowder ? It is they who are responsible for it. We repudiate the charge unequivocally and unreservedly.

I won't detain you gentlemen any more but I just want to point out to you that for those very reasons and those very circumstances it is absolutely necessary that we should stick to the language of the resolution that has been proposed before you by Mahatmaji, that is "by peaceful and legitimate means" and having accepted that resolution as he told you in his concluding address, our duty does not end there. Just I want to tell you one word. The path may be long and tedious. The goal may be distant though I hope it is not. The task may be difficult. But there is nothing impossible for a nation of three hundred and fifteen millions. If we

decide to do our duty manfully and fearlessly in a spirit of selfless devotion to the interest of the country, what we are aiming at we shall achieve at no distant time, and if any Englishman or if any English party or if any English public helps us in attaining that object the glory shall be theirs. We are at perfect liberty and from our hearts we desire to work in co-operation with such people. But I may tell you that while we may place every faith in the words of an English gentleman we can no longer place any faith in the words of British statesmen.

8. MESSAGE TO YOUNG INDIA

From the very early days of my boyhood, I have been under the impression that no education under the aegis of a foreign Government would be solely for the benefit of the country or the governed. As a general doctrine, we know that all governments first look to their own interests and they establish educational institutions in order to strengthen themselves. That is why educational thinkers of the world have questioned the wisdom of letting the State control the education of the children of the community. The object of a foreign government in starting educational institutions is not so much as the welfare of the country governed, but the welfare of their own Government and the strengthening of its hold upon the country governed. Leaving aside the ethics of the question, it is only natural that an Imperial Government should be dominated by imperial principles. We find the same principles dominating the educational policies of the different Governments, e.g., the monarchical form of Government in Japan. Even under national governments, government for the time being dominate the educational policy of the country for strengthening their own hold upon the people and a foreign government is bound to do it to a greater extent and hence the duty of the people to guard against the insidious poison.

It was under that impression that we found forty years ago that the education we were receiving was not likely to further the interests of nationalism, but was bound to hamper it, that it was emasculating, denationalising and creating a gulf between the educated and the non-educated classes which went to the root of the nation and we thought that it was an attempt to uproot the foundation by which the nation has stood from time immemorial and

Excerpts from the Presidential address at the All India College Students Conference held at Nagpur on 25 December 1920.

without which the nation could not exist as an individual nation. Being unable and practically being impotent politically to start another system of our own, we decided to counteract the influences of that system by combining the two systems and establishing institutions which although prepared students for the University examination might, to a certain extent, remove defects which we complained of. It was under that impression that we started the D. A. V. College.[1] Later on, as a result of discussion among our councillors some of the original founders came to the conclusion that they must cut away from University courses. I must say that those and similar institutions founded by other great patriots have failed in their objects ; for somehow or other, Government and the University imposed conditions and restrictions upon them by which the object of the original founders was negatived and could not be fulfilled.

I hold the opinion that the educational system at present followed in Government schools and colleges, aided and unaided, or controlled by official Universities, is a denationalising system. It is meant more to enslave us than to free us. You cannot expect the jailor to prepare his own death warrant. We have been trying for the last thirty years to counteract the evil influences of that system and maintain the independence of those institutions and we have to a certain extent succeeded in counteracting the evil influences, though not fully. There was a time in the history of our country, when, under the influence of education imparted in our schools, we were being taught and encouraged to look down upon everything that was indigenous. Everything Indian was held up to ridicule and we indulged in many an antic in order to show that we were just being civilised. We were taught that everything Indian was barbaric and deserved contempt. Fortunately for us we have passed through that stage.

Here I must sound a note of warning against going to the other extreme. We are standing the danger of going to the other extreme and considering everything Indian as absolutely perfect. Discussions on the value of civilisations are being carried on in a very narrow spirit and authorities are quoted for propositions which on the whole do not justify the conclusions. I wish to warn against the danger of being carried off our feet by too much or excessive enthusiasm for everything we may consider national. I must warn you, and so far as I am concerned, truth is truth, knowledge is knowledge

and science is science. It is neither Eastern nor Western, neither Indian nor European. We have to maintain our national continuity. That is absolutely necessary and we have, therefore, in all educational schemes that we evolve to copy all that is Indian. We do not want to be either European or an American nation and we want to remain an Indian nation but quite up-to date, absolutely up-to-date. We do not want to be a mere copy of our past, but we want to build our future upon the historical structure of the past by making it stronger. That should be the policy underlying all schemes of education we may evolve. I want the younger generation to guard against the danger of a narrow cramping nationalism which will not unite India itself. You must remember that in India we have various communities, following various religions, and, to a certain extent, each has contributed its own quota of civilisation and culture to our country. In order to make stronger the Indian nationality composed of these various communities and cultures we shall have to look at these cultures with the eyes of freedom, absolutely free to absorb all that is good in each culture, and contribute it to the joint culture of whole nation. True nationalism must be above the religious and sectarian influences.

We are living in a world which is throwing away every day new ideas. Nobody knows and understands the evil influences, the slave tendencies and the immoral nature of a great many institutions of modern civilisation. I have said in my book[2] that modern civilisation is dying, and die it must, and it is clear that it is suffering from a disease from which it cannot be cured. You might dislike the moderners, abhor their social systems and institutions. You might not follow them. In fact they should not be followed, particularly in the social and economic system, but at the same time you cannot shut your eyes to the fact that science and knowledge have made wonderful progress during the past two hundred years. We shall be cutting our noses to spite our faces if we deprive ourselves of that stock of knowledge which the moderners have accumulated to the benefit of humanity at large. We should be sufficiently strong in our moral sense, culture, strong in our own indigenous culture, strong in our national to assimilate all that and to use it for our own system rather than shun it. We ought to pursue science and knowledge from whatever culture it comes and use it with an open mind fully determined to assimilate it to our own system and make the fullest use of it for the purpose of freeing our country, getting it free for ever and

maintain our freedom and individuality at any cost.

The object of this organisation as I understood it, was to create as a permanent organisation of college students those who have passed beyond the matric standard, to look after their interests and to advise the general body of students in the country. I am not one of those who believe that students, particulary University students, ought not to meddle in politics. I think it is a most stupid theory and an impossible theory too. It is the creation not of confused brains but of dishonest brains. You cannot prevent a man from forming political opinions on the burning questions of the day. If I were an administrator, I would rather let the students express themselves and be done with it, as sometimes we do, than create a situation as was created in Bengal ten years ago by the Risley and other circulars. I do not care what the policy of Government is on this subject. I find that there are good many among us who believe that students ought not to have to do anything with politics. I do not subscribe to that proposition at all. My conception of the need of an All-India Students' organisation is that while students ought to be free to study politics, have opinions on political questions and express them at times whenever there is need through their organisation, they ought to steer clear of politics. Otherwise this organisation might be turned into a political organisation and the division among political parties will be carried into the students camp. That does not bind on you the duty to keep silence. You may express your opinions as a body whenever necessary on political questions. You may agree with some political organisation and disagree with others. I do not want you not to do it. But at the same time, if you really want to create and improve an organisation which should carry weight with the whole student community of India, you should aim at representative institutions. If you arrive at decisions which require certain action and conduct on your part you will follow that conduct which is expected of you by the resolutions. Even if some of you do not agree to follow, I hope that you would not give your decisions that mandatory character which will exclude others. Your constitution at the present stage should be possessed of sufficient elasticity to enable you to expand it on national lines, to make it really a representative organisation.

Regarding the question of students and Non-co-operation, I shall state my position as it has evolved. So far I do not know how

it is going to evolve in future. In my concluding address at the Special Congress at Calcutta I said I was opposed to that item in the Non-co-operation programme which relates to boys in schools. Speaking on a later occasion, I have been expressing views which to some might seem inconsistent with that position, but which I never considered to be so. At Lahore I addressed a public meeting when I told students and others that I would welcome practically the abolition of the Arts Colleges. After that, whenever students approached me for advice, it was given under the following heads—Law College, leave it at once. Medical, engineering, and technical schools, I said, do not leave. Arts Colleges, I said "consider the situation well and if you really feel the call of duty, leave the Arts Colleges, but under no delusion that some one is going to make provision in national schools established by the leaders of the National Congress."

Differences of opinion there has been to a very great extent, not as to the spirit of the resolution, but as to working and the way in which it is to be carried out. We are agreed that we should do nothing on earth or heaven which will strengthen the hands of the bureaucracy. It is a positive sin to do anything to strengthen or continue this rule under the present or in any form. We are agreed that the present system of education does strengthen that object and we are also agreed that we should do what little we can, considering our present political responsibilities in the way of establishing institutions which might be free from official control both on the side of finance and education. I do not know whether we are agreed that national schools and colleges now established will be included to carry on the more important work of political propaganda in the country. We cannot afford to do that as we are out for proclaiming Swaraj in the shortest possible time and we cannot give our time and energy to a solution of the problem which requires both time and money. I have, therefore, been saying to my friends that we shall not incur any responsibilities and we shall not undertake any duties which will in any way militate against the great work which we have in hand. If we do that, we shall be frittering away our energies in enterprises the result of which might not be further achieved very soon.

We cannot devise a national system of education in this country without a national Government and unless we achieve a national

Government we shall not be able to solve the problem of nationality. That does not prevent us from making attempts at the solution of the problem in our own humble way making experiments. Therefore, I am of opinion that all energy, time and resources we have at our disposal ought to be concentrated in achieving Swaraj, self-government and freedom and emancipating ourselves from this Government I am perfectly willing to ask and encourage every student in any arts or law college to leave off the college, if he feels the call of duty, provided he is under no delusion (mind that, because I have seen that in my own place a provision is going to be provincially made for his education either locally or imperially).

There is a great field for propaganda work for organising the nation for reviving industries and there is work to make an honourable living without being traitors to our country. Put your hand to any work you find handy. I know that sometime back the sentence of Gandhi was ridiculed, viz. that people ought to go and construct roadside works, in factories. My student friends, you ought to remember that one of the greatest defects of the present educational system is that it enables you neither to think independently nor act independently. Real education should aim to make you men, fit to think and act independently, in finding an independent work. Don't find yourselves in an embarrassing position by your white clothes. Go into the country, find out any work you can lay your hand upon, make yourselves useful to the society and learn honesty. In my eyes, honest patriotic work in road-repairing is infinitely superior to a Deputy Collector's post. I want the youth of the nation to go forth into the villages and the factories, work with their hands in the spirit of comradeship along with the villagers who are waiting for inspiration from you. So long as the educated community keeps itself aloof from the actual tillers of the soil and workers in factories, it shall never attain Swaraj. Swaraj will not be attained by the efforts of a few educated people, but by the whole nation which lives in workshops and on the soil. Therefore, it should be your duty, if you really feel the call of duty, not to question what shall be our career in the future.

This bogey of career, coupled with the bogey of academic careers, has spoiled the whole point of view of educational discussions. It is not the principal object of life to seek a career or to be an

academic animal. The object of life is to be efficient as a citizen and member of society. It is a vicious ideal which places excellence and fashions on a high pedestal. Anybody who can speak English well considers himself to be an enlightened and great man. I have found many a fool among those who can read and speak excellent English. It is an entirely false standard of education to desire to go down as a stylist. It is a good piece of art, but it is not the main purpose of life. We ought to see the main purpose of life in education rather than see it in the fashion which places us on a false pedestal. I earnestly appeal to those of you who take to Non-co-operation to go forth into the country, to leave the cities and central places of which you are so fond, to go into the villages, workshops and factories, live there and then give them the inspiration which you have derived from your education. Unless you do that, you are merely passing resolutions which would be mere sham. Infinitely slavish as we are, we will be adopting another vice, that is, of passing resolutions without putting them into operation. If you pass resolutions it is your duty to act up to them. Do not pass resolutions in the hurry of enthusiasm or to please someone. If you do that you will bring discredit on the whole movement and on the men whom you revere and you will also demoralise your nation if you pass resolutions only to advise others. For God's sake, we have had enough of them and we do not want the students' aid to add to that burden.

You must also consider before passing your resolutions whether you are prepared to withstand the beatings of your parents and all the nice arguments that they put forward of career, of honours, emoluments and other things. Are you prepared to suffer and give up your fashionable habits? In that case go forth in the name of God and elevate your country. The country needs as many workers in the field as it can find. Workers are very few. All of you can be absorbed in the great work that lies before us. As regards medical and engineering colleges, I am thinking over that problem. I do want that education for my country. At present the Medical and the Engineering colleges are the two great strengths of the Indian Army and I have come to the conclusion whether it will not be advisable to follow the same course for these two departments too. I have not formed my own definite opinions and so I cannot advise you now. But that is the trend of my thought lately.

It will be my duty to help you. I do not say guide you, in coming to a conclusion. Be absolutely tolerant of any differences of opinion that may exist. To me it matters little which way you decide. As I said already the decision on this Non-co-operation Resolution lies with others, i.e., the Congress and you will be simply following the Congress.

9. ON SUSPENSION OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT

WITH THE Bardoli resolutions[1] our movement has reached a stage which makes it necessary to have a close searching of the hearts and a clear idea of where and how we stand. Within the last eighteen months, from September 1920 up to date of the Bardoli resolutions we have made several mistakes, both in principles and in practice, in premises as well as conclusion. These mistakes ought to be openly acknowledged, atoned for and the responsibility for them placed on proper shoulders so that we may be in a position to chalk out our future course of conduct, with surer grasp of the realities of the situation than we have hitherto done.

Before I proceed to mention these mistakes and my share in them, I want to acknowledge as handsomely as I can the debt of gratitude we all owe to Mahatma Gandhi. He has made "Himalayan" blunders as he says and the country in general and we of the non-co-operation movement will share the suffering that is to result therefrom but if the balance-sheet of our losses and gains be prepared I have no hesitation in saying that we will find that on the whole we have considerably gained. His leadership and personal contact with him, has made us more truthful, more courageous, more self-sacrificing and simpler and purer, in the manner and habits of our living. He has brought home to us as no one else could, the value and virtue of living absolutely in the open, concealing nothing, hiding nothing, playing no tricks, no dodges which are ordinarily associated with political movements. He has taught us the value of absolute sincerity in our dealings with the people as well as the Government and the general conduct of the movement for freedom. He has also instilled in us a spirit of discipline, self-confidence and

Letter addressed by Lala Lajpat Rai to the members of the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress in February 1922, on receiving the news of the suspension of the Non-co-operation Movement by Mahatma Gandhi. Lajpat Rai was then in prison at Lahore.

suffering in the cause of truth, which was somewhat lacking before. In any case under his leadership we have progressed in these virtues both quantitatively and qualitatively. His greatest service, however, lies in the closer understanding between Hindus and Mohamedans which has been brought under his aegis and inspiration. He has placed the Hindu-Muslim unity on a much higher and better plane than it had ever been attempted before by any other leader, living or dead. Some of us had been working in the cause of freedom and reform for decades before his appearance in the public life of the country but never before did we come in contact with a leader of his personal magnetism, transparent honesty of purpose, absolute sincerity of intention, untiring and never ending fund of energy and almost limitless capacity for work under even the most harassing and distressing of circumstances. Spiritually, socially and even politically the country certainly stands much higher than it did before March, 1919. Never before in the experience of living men did a leader so successfully and unfailingly appreciate the genius of his people and felt their pulse as Mahatma Gandhi has done in the course of the last three years. I wonder, if ever in the history of India a single person has had so much influence over the masses of India as Mahatmaji acquired. I have no hesitation in saying not only that he is the greatest Indian living but that he is one of the greatest of men of all ages, all times and all countries. Yet that is exactly the reason why we have to swallow the bitter pill of ignominious defeat today, because, say what we may, we have been defeated and that too very badly. Our defeat is in proportion to the greatness of our leader. Several times and in several matters, in the course of the last eighteen months, we surrendered our better judgements to his decision.

Fundamentally we have been right all the time. Our mistakes have been mistakes more of calculation, of methods, of programme and of tactics than of principles. Fundamentally I still believe that Non-violent Non-co-operation is the only road that will lead us to our goal. I have all my life believed in Non-co-operation with a foreign government. It was left to Mahatma Gandhi to prefix "Non-violent" to it and to place it before the country in the form of an organised programme. This certainly improved the situation and the co-operation of a section of the great Muslim community made it workable. I have no doubt in my mind that the road followed by our "moderate"

countrymen is not the right road which will lead us to Swarajya. The experience of the last six months has only strengthened me in that belief. It was a harsh speech that I made in Bombay in May last[2]. I am sorry for using certain expressions which caused pain to my moderate friends but in the main my reading of the situation was correct and it has been proved to be correct, by events that have happened within the last six months. The eminent Indians who have occupied high posts under the Government have completely identified themselves with the view-point of the bureaucracy. I maintain that in the circumstances they could not but do so. No one would have believed that men like Dr. Sapru, Mr. Chintamani, Pt. Jagat Narain, Mr. Setalvad, Mr. Rahmat Ullah, Raja of Mahmudabad, Mr. Joshi of Amraoti, Mr. Sinha of Patna, Babu S.N. Bannerji and others would have consented to apply the Criminal Law Amendment Act to an organisation like that of the Congress and Khilafat Volunteers and would have jusitified or excused all or nearly all that has been done by the bureaucracy in the name of law and order within the last six months.[3] Two years before it would have been impossible to believe that all this would happen under the authority, sanction and approval of these eminent Indians. Yet this has come to pass. The rank and file of the moderate party have made a brave fight against bureaucratic methods of repression and for that fight all credit is due to them, but that fight has not been of much use. On one side their own leaders in office opposed them and on the other Mahatmaji's inflexibility made their efforts useless. Assuming, but not admitting, that their opposition to Non-co-operation in general and to Civil Disobedience in special was sound they should have foreseen that measures like the Criminal Law Amendment Act, the Seditious Meetings Act and the Press Act are the very denial of the rights of free speech, free press and free association. Experience has quite amply proved that legislative powers taken for special occasions and for emergencies have always been used by the Governments for purposes other than those for which they were taken. Governments have a knack of forgetting their pledges and promises when it suits their purpose. Firstly, the persons change, secondly, the circumstances. A law is law and so long as it is on the statute book no one can reasonably blame a government for using it, for purposes other than for which it was enacted, if the letter of the law gives them the right to do so. The late Mr. Gokhale voted for the Press

Act under certain promises given by the Government[4] as to its use but the Government used it for other purposes even in the life time of Mr. Gokhale, and in spite of his protest. Similarly the Hon'ble Mr. Burgri, Mr. J. Chaudhuri and Dr. Gour may have signed the Repressive Laws committee report[5] (which recommended the retention of the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the Seditious Meetings Act on the Statute book) under certain impressions as to the use which the Government was likely to make of them but that does not and cannot prevent the Government from using them as they have done and hurling their signatures in their faces, when they object to their use. These and other facts have confirmed me in the opinion that we were fundamentally right in adopting "progressive Non-violent Non-co-operation" as practically the only cure for our political disease short of an armed rebellion. Violence for political purposes by unarmed people is madness. To talk of violent methods is also in my judgement criminal folly. I do not believe in non-violence as an absolute article of faith to be respected and practised *under all circumstances and in all conditions*, but, I do believe that it will be nothing short of madness to rely on violence or to even think of it under the present conditions of life in India. These conditions are not likely to change in the near future, so, we may as well eliminate the idea of violence for political purposes from the range of practical politics. I will not discuss the morality of it here. In short, my faith is still strong in "Non-violent Non-co-operation." I did not agree to it under the belief that it will necessarily lead to violence, or that I desired it to lead to that. I have honestly worked to that end and I am proud to say that my province has practised it under the greatest and the most humiliating provocations. All classes in the Punjab have proved worthy of the faith that was put in them. The most warlike of them, the Sikhs, have given the lead and for that they deserve our best thanks.

So fundamentally my position today is exactly the same as it was in September 1920, at the conclusion of the Special Congress at Calcutta, but unhappily experience has only confirmed the doubts that I then entertained about the soundness of our programme. The Bardoli resolutions force me to the conclusion that the programme embodied in the resolutions of Mr. Dass or in the amendment of Mr. Pal was perhaps sounder than the one finally adopted.[6] The latter was based on several assumptions which have now

proved to be wrong. We were very solemnly told at Calcutta that seventy millions of our Mohamedan countrymen had adopted the programme and by its rejection we would be not only disappointing them but inviting their opposition. The unsoundness of that assumption was twice pointed out at the meetings of the Subjects Committee but the enthusiasm of our Mohamedan fellow-workers and the supreme influence of Mahatma Gandhi carried everything before it. Experience has shown that that assumption was unjustified. The greater majority of educated Muslims have kept aloof, though those who started have worked for it with all their might In the Punjab where the Muslims are in the majority and in the North-West Frontier Province where they are 90 per cent. the movement has failed to enlist the co-operation of even a small fraction of educated Muslims. The vast bulk of them feel deeply for the Khilafat, they are prepared to undergo a certain amount of suffering for it ; they may give their money for it but they are not prepared for all that non-violent non-co-operation involves. The appeals for the Tilak Swaraj Fund[7] and the Congress, did not evoke much response from the Punjabee Muslims, neither did those for the membership of the Khilafat, but the appeals for Khilafat and Angora funds have met with hearty responses. What is the moral? Not that the Hindus should not work for the Khilafat ; nor that we should not work for Hindu-Muslim unity, but the assumption upon which Mahatma Gandhi insisted on his own programme of non-co-operation being accepted, was unjustifiable, and that political consciousness among the Muslims is not up to the mark. We will have to work for it patiently and with a great deal of forbearance and tolerance.

The second blunder was to fix a period of twelve months for the completion of the programme. The Calcutta Congress did not commit itself to this in the resolution, but Mahtama Gandhi and the Ali Brothers[8] did in their speeches. In an unfortunate moment it was embodied in the resolution of the Nagpur Congress and emphasised later on, on almost all occasions. The lawyers were to suspend their practice for one year, the students were to leave their schools for one year and the whole programme was to be put through with clock like regularity within one year. Now this was not done to stimulate progress, as Mahatmaji denies that, and he is the very soul of honour. He believed that he would succeed in completing the programme within one year and in bringing the Government to its knees. This

was a huge miscalculation, if it meant the creating of such a non-violent atmosphere as is contemplated by the Bardoli resolutions. The last twelve months or rather fourteen months have been a remarkable period of achievement. The country, the Congress and Mahatmaji may well be proud of it. I am glad to have lived to take part in it and to see the happenings of the last three months. They have filled me with hope and pride and Mahatmaji might well have come out successful, if he had not pitched his ideal of non-violence so high as to make it impossible of achievement. Seen in this light it is well that the great army of students in the schools and colleges did not leave their schools and colleges in response to our appeals. Had they done so, the success from the point of view of Non-violence would have been even less. As matters stand the country has been deeply affected by Mahatmaji's desire for non-violence and the columns of *Young India*, and other papers bear ample testimony to the same. We have been defeated not because the country did not rise equal to the occasion but because Mahatmaji pitched his standard too high for the possibility of achievement. I have no doubt in my mind that it is impossible, and if Mahatmaji believed in its being reached within one year he was labouring under a great delusion. I will not speak for others but what I aimed at was this : (a) that we will neither use nor encourage violence, (b) that we will do everything possible to eliminate chances of violence, (c) and that we will by all means at our disposal discountenance violence. I have never believed and do not believe that it is possible to eliminate all chances of violence from human affairs ; much less from a political struggle of such magnitude as we are engaged in, and against such odds. However we may deplore tragedies like the one enacted at Gorakhpur[9], we cannot eliminate them from human calculations. The Gorakhpur tragedy was brutally inhuman but it was nothing compared with the brutalities of which the civilized governments of the world were guilty during the last war, and in which they indulge almost daily in some part of the world or the other. The governments do it deliberately, with purpose and design and glorify in it. The mobs in all parts of the world do it only under provocation and in passion. To change the hearts of the mobs in such a way as to make it impossible for them to indulge in these brutalities without changing the hearts of the governments that rule over them is an impossibility. When humanity reaches that

point it will cease to be human, it will become a body of supermen, of *Devatas*, and it will no longer need the guidance of men of the type of Mahatma Gandhi. I will assume that some volunteers did take part in causing the tragedy, but did Mahatmaji expect that the thousands of volunteers enrolled in the different provinces within the last twelve months would have risen so high in self-discipline as to make it impossible for even a few of them to go astray. The forbearance shown by the volunteers and others in the last twelve months is monumental. They have been mercilessly beaten, insulted and humiliated ; their elders, their friends, their relations and their womenfolk have been treated most brutally, yet the great bulk of them have kept their temper in the one hope that *Mahatmaji will carry through his programme of Civil Disobedience and secure Swaraj for them.* Mahatmaji had raised their hopes to the highest pitch in spite of an occasional scepticism from some of us. They placed their implicit faith in him, his word was God's word. Yet they find that because a few of them in the northern corner of U.P. went mad, Mahatmaji has chosen to throw down all of them from the high pedestal to which he had raised them. The mistakes of a few have been made the basis of a general denunciation of the whole movement. Mahatmaji himself has found us guilty of coercion, intimidation, lack of discipline, lack of faith and lack of organisation. He even finds fault with us for having failed to realise the membership dues for the year 1922, forgetting that it was under his order that we started what he called : "Defensive Disobedience" and went to jails, in our thousands : that it was under his orders that we suspended the constitution and devoted ourselves exclusively to the work of filling the jails. We could not fill the jails and collect subscriptions at one and the same time.

In saying this, I am not expressly objecting to the postponement of the programme of mass Civil Disobedience. What I do object to, however, are the implications of that action and his subsequent explanations. Did Mahatmaji really believe that when he exhorted people to go to jail even to defend the elementary rights of free speech, free press and free association by defying the "laws" and the authorities he was promoting the cause of the 'Peace' and helping in keeping the atmosphere calm ? Did he really believe that all those who had pledged themselves in all good faith and in perfect sincerity

to non-violence would be able to keep their temper under all provocations and under all circumstances ? Did he really believe that all the martial people of India who had rallied to his standard in "perfect good faith" had become lambs. I am a very inferior sort of a person and quite unfit to unloosen the latches of Mahatmaji's shoes but I cannot help saying that if Mahatmaji believed in all this and if he still believes that in the course of another twelve months or for the matter of that in another fifty years he will be able to achieve this, he is quite mistaken, and his simplicity may well be envied. Gentlemen, let us not labour under any delusions of the kind. Human nature can certainly be changed but it cannot be changed so rapidly, specially under the circumstances in which we live. A political leader is like a general, and no general can afford to be chicken-hearted. A general can denounce, degrade, even shoot such of his soldiers and subordinates as do not follow his directions and obey his orders, but he has no right to throw down arms and admit his defeat involving the capture of his army by the enemy, simply because a few out of millions have disregarded his wishes. Leaders of political campaign for freedom cannot afford to wear their hearts on their sleeves. Please do not misunderstand me. I consider Mahatmaji to be the bravest of men. I do not charge him with cowardice. I honestly believe that he is a man who would die at the post of duty rather than desert it. What I am pointing out is this, that such impossible principles are out of place in political campaign. Bardoli resolutions are a proof of his bravery not of his cowardice, but they have conclusively established that there can be no campaign of Civil Disobedience under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership. The items should either be dropped altogether from the programme or if it is to be retained it should be retained with the fullest understanding of its implications.

I do not think you can now reject the Bardoli resolutions. The movement of Civil Disobedience has for the present been killed and it is not in your power to revive it. In my humble opinion we have made several mistakes in the last two months. Firstly, Mahatmaji's speech at the Malaviya Conference[10] was rather tactless. The explanation that he subesquently gave in his letter to Mr. Sheshgiri Iyer should have been a part of his speech and his tone should have been more conciliatory. Taking advantage of that conference and of the general policy in the country against the repressive laws, he

should have postponed Civil Disobedience for a longer period than he did. Then his final ultimatum[11] to the Government was couched in language which left much room for improvement. From that ultimatum to Bardoli resolution is a climb down which is staggering. The fact is that no single man however able, high-minded, noble, wise and sagacious can lead a movement of this nature without making mistakes. Mahatmaji's over-confidence in his judgement and his impulsiveness has often landed us, his humble colleagues, in very false positions but now we are simply routed, and the only thing for us to do is to be happy in our prison cells in the consciousness that at least we have not contributed to the collapse of the movement, and that at any rate, we can expiate our sins of omission and commission better here than outside.

In the meantime poor India is between two mill-stones—one is that of false opportunism, and the other that of impossible non-violence. Before I close the letter I want to say that our neglect to keep foreign countries informed of what was going on in India has also been almost criminal and it is time that we should undo that mistake. No foreign country can give us any kind of substantial help, yet to ignore them altogether is very harmful to our cause.

To Mahatmaji, I want to say one word. Please forgive me if I have misjudged you, but a sense of duty has compelled me to disgorge my mind. It has done me good. My love and respect for you is unabated but my faith in your political leadership has received a rude shock. I hope I am mistaken but any way, accept me as I am impulsive, sinful, angry, may be hasty but certainly not insincere.

P.S. Nothing in the foregoing implies that in my judgement the country is ready for mass Civil Disobedience or that we ought not to confirm the Bardoli resolution about that. I have simply discussed the point to express that Mahatma Gandhi's ideal of non-violence is impossible from the practical point of view. As to the actual programme to be followed, just now I am not in a position to give any definite opinion.

Offering oneself for arrest should not be stopped. If Government still continues making arrests then it will be punishment and will demoralize people.

10. A B C OF INDIAN POLITICS

In the days of the agitation against the partition of Bengal, a Bengali lawyer (now a knighted and pensioned judge of the High Court of Calcutta)[1] remarked that a subject nation has no politics. What he meant was that the politics of a subject nation was entirely different from that of the free nation. In a free nation, the politicians use the constitution for the purpose of reforming and improving the political machinery, so as to bring it in full and better accord with the will of the nation, to make it more efficient, more democratic, and more representative of the constituent wills of the nation. In a free nation, a reactionary politician has his uses. He serves the purpose of a brake or moderator. The politicians of a free nation may aptly be divided into Radicals, Liberals and Conservatives ; into evolutionaries and revolutionaries ; into Democrats and anti-Democrats ; into Royalists and Republicans and so forth. The politics of a free nation assumes its sovereign nature and its right to deal with other nations on terms of equality and friendship. This is not and cannot be true of a subject people. Firstly a subject people are not a "nation" in the true sense of the term. As long as a people are not free, they are not a political entity with which nations can deal on terms of reciprocation. They have no will which they can enforce or execute. They are a mere mass of heterogeneous elements, which can be or are used by their masters for their purposes. These masters may be good or kindly people,

1. In this well thought out essay written during his imprisonment in Lahore Central Jail in 1922 Lala Lajpat Rai discussed the fundamentals of the Indian Problem in a remarkably clear and outspoken manner. It was originally published in the *Modern Review* (June and September 1922) under the name of Lajpat Rai's son, Amrit Rai.

they may be inclined to be 'benevolent' or exacting, but they are masters all the time. A subject people have no corporate will, because if they had one, they would not be subject, nor have they a free will, because, if they had one, they would have the power to enforce it.

A free nation has a state, which is responsible to the nation. The nation can change the state, can limit its powers, define its responsibilities and bend it to its will. This is not true of a subject people. The very fact of their subjection takes them out of the category of live political units. A government is only an organ of the state.

A free nation can change its government at will. That is its freedom. The politicians of a free country can take care of the liberties of the people ; but in the subject country the subjects have no liberties, because the state which is absolutely independent of the people owes no responsibilities to the latter except such as are of its own making and admission, that is, self-imposed. These latter may be called concessions, gifts, or boons, but they do not amount to liabilities, or responsiblities and have no binding force. Even among the free nations, the idea of the responsible state is a new one, which is not yet fully developed in its bearings. In some countries it is denied in theory, though there is hardly a state in Europe and America where it is not accepted in practice. Even sovereign states are subject to the sovereignty of the nations. There the people can talk of their fundamental rights, of their fundamental liberties. In a subject country the people have no rights or liberties. They have only duties, which have been imposed upon them by the will of state, which is a power exterior to and independent of them. In a responsible state, the laws are the commands of the nation expressed and promulgated in ways and means sanctioned by the nation. In the case of a subject nation the so-called laws are the commands of the rulers, expressed and promulgated by them at their will. It is a misnomer to call them laws. They may be laws in the Austinian sense of the term. But the world has changed since Austin wrote and the conception of law has also changed. A law is now the wish or will of the sovereign nation expresed and promulgated in ways sanctioned or approved by it. Even the sovereign "nation" cannot abrogate certain natural rights of the individual and where it does, the individual has a right to disregard the will

of the nation so abrogating its "inalienable and imprescribable rights". But, surely, where the nation has no will, or is by virtue of its subjection incapable of expressing its will, or where its politics are controlled, dominated and governed by an exterior power, there is no such thing as "law" in the real sense of the term. According to the old theory*, the nation has a distinct personality from that of the individuals who compose it.

It has thus a will naturally superior to the will of its constituent individuals, simply because the collective person is superior to the individual person. This superiority consists in what we call public service or sovereignty. The nation is organised. It has built a government to represent it. That government acts as the agent of the national volition. It thus exercises in the name of the nation a sovereignty of which it cannot be deprived. The state is thus the sovereign nation organised as a government and situated on a definite territory. The state as the organised nation is thus the subject of sovereignty and the public power gives to it the right to exercise a subjective law. Its commands are the exercise of this law.

Its members are at once citizens and subjects. As a part of the national collectivity which exercises sovereignty they are citizens, but since they are subordinated to a government exercising sovereignty in the name of the nation, they are also subjects. Constitutional law is thus that mass of relations dealing, first with the organisation of the state and second, with the relation of the state to its members. We have thus two unequal subjects of law—the superior juristic person called the state, and the inferior individuals called the subjects. But the subjection right of the state is opposed to the sovereign right of the individual. The latter is a natural right, inalienable and imprescribable.

"It belongs to the individual by virtue of his humanity. It is a right anterior, even superior, to that of the state. Clearly, therefore, the first rule of constitutional law obliges the state to organise itself so as to secure the maximum protection of individual rights to every human being."

* See "Law in the Modern State" by Lean Duguit, Introduction.

This was the theory of the 19th century. In the realm of theory it still holds the field. But the present evolution has been summarised by the French jurist whom I have quoted above.

"The ruling class has no subjective sovereignty. It has a power which it exerts in return for the organisation of those public services which are consistently to respond to the public need. Its acts have neither force, nor legal value save as they contribute to this end."

"Constituent law is no longer a mass of rules applying to superior and subordinate, to a power that can command and a subject that must obey. All wills are individual wills ; all are of equal validity ; there is no hierarchy of wills ; the measure of their difference is determined by the end they must pursue.... So it is that the idea of service replaces the idea of sovereignty. The state is no longer a sovereign power issuing its commands. The idea of public service lies at the root of the theory of the modern state".

The tendency of recent thought is to dispute the absolute sovereignty of the state, to deny its subjective rights, to emphasise its objective duties and to hold that the authority of law is independent of the state and that "the state is beneath the law ; for, by its very definition it is an instrument, not an end". It is clear to an unsophisticated mind that in the political sphere there is no such thing as an Indian nation or an Indian state. The nation whose will counts, is the British, the state which actually rules and the government that functions is that of Great Britain. There is no such thing in India as government established by its law. The government of India is at best only an agency of the British Government. In the words of Lord Curzon, it is a subordinate department of the British Government. The Reform Act of 1919 has made no change in its status ! In fact, by its very preamble and defining clause it has emphasised its subordinate nature and its derivative authority. By no fiction can it be postulated that the Indian people are a part of the British nation and citizens of the British State or the British Empire—not even in sense in which the black inhabitants of Senigambia are citizens of the French Republic. The inhabitants of French colonies and French dependencies are more or less French citizens, because they have a right of representation in the French State. The Indians, however, have no such right.

The Reform Act has done nothing more than created in India a department of the British State to which the latter has delegated certain of its powers subject to right of revision and recall. The Reform Act may at any minute be recalled by the British State without any reference to the people of India, or it may be revised by them in such a way as to take away the little it has conceded to them. Even as it is, its veto is absolute and complete.

The fact that India is one of the original signatories to the Covenant of the League of Nations, that its 'representatives' have been admitted into the councils of the Empire on terms of equality, that an Indian was nominated as a member at the British delegation to the Washington Conference,[2] may tickle the vanity of those who see in these arrangements means of personal glory and aggrandisement, but it does not make the slightest difference in the real status of India as a subject country. India cannot be free by its memberships of the League of Nations, or by its representation at the Washington Conference. It will be free only when its people are in a position to make its government function in accordance with their will. Even ten thousand 'Rt. Hon'bles' cannot bring about its freedom, much less bring any glory to it, as long as the Indian people do not constitute themselves into a sovereign nation and thereby bring into existence a state which will look for its authority to the Indian nation. Mr. Sastri[3] has pronounced his benediction on the policy of repression which has resulted in Mr. Gandhi's imprisonment. Does Mr. Sastri realize what that benediction implies and connotes ? It betrays a deplorable ignorance of the constructive side of politics ; it shows a confused intellect. He and those who think with him justify all this interference with the liberty of the press, of speech and of meeting on the part of the Government of India on the ground that the first and foremost duty of every Government is to maintain "law and order". The doctrine is as pernicious and mischievous as it is antiquated and out of tune with modern conditions of life. I have pointed out above that there is no such thing as Indian "law" in the real and modern sense of the term. There is certainly English Law which has been imposed upon us by our rulers. Morally, and legally (i.e. according to law in the abstract as expounded by the latest and most enlightened authorities), we owe no allegiance to that law, though according to the British made statute law we do. Our allegiance only comes from the

irresistible power of the Government and the powerlessness of the Indian people. The British have conquered us. They have conquered us by our help—by our men and money—that is perfectly true ; but all the same, they owe their power to the fact of conquest. According to the ideas of morality, the conquest gives them the right to impose their rule and their laws on us. Willingly or unwillingly we must submit to their rule and their laws as long as we do not come into the possession of such power as will force them to restore our liberties to us. Our first and foremost duty, then, is to find out the key to that power. In the meantime, they must exercise their right of might and rule us to their best advantage. The British say: "Prove that you are fit to govern yourself, and we shall retire". The statement may not be sincere, but it is perfectly true. The moment the Indian people prove to the English that they are fit to rule themselves, the English will concede their right to them. But fitness for self-government will come only from power. The measure of our power to impose our will on them will be the proof of our fitness. The duty of every Indian patriot, then, consists in educating his people to formulate their will and to acquire the training, the discipline and the power of imposing it on their foreign masters. The logic of the British Imperialist is sufficiently clear. He wants to gather the harvest he has sown and to take as much advantage of our helplessness as he can. Some, comparatively a very small number, have acquired the consciousness that it is a bad business, immoral, and harmful in the long run—harmful even to the nation—and that it must be ended. Their number, however, is so small that their voice counts for nothing—they are only Little Englanders. The vast bulk of the British nation, Tory, Liberal, Nationalist, and Internationalist, is Imperialistic to the core. Arguments and ideas do not impress them. Political morality they have none, except such as suits their imperial aims. Appeals to their sense of justice, fair play and humanity are absolutely useless. Of course, there are Britishers that have their own characteristics. Some are soft ; others, hard. Some have the mailed fist ; others, the kid glove. Some are brutally frank ; others are magnificently benevolent. Some prefer to brandish the keen-edged metal ; others the keen-edged tongue. Some prefer to rule by the pen ; others by the sword. Some are genuinely, Liberal, Labourite or Socialist. They are prepared to go far enough, but the moment you question their final supremacy,

they change colour and forget all political principles.

They are awfully clever and past masters in the art of cant. They mean what they say, but you do not understand them. The political terms they use have meanings quite different from those in ordinary dictionaries. When they make any political promises, or give any political pledges, they are quite sincere, but they are not bound by them. Firstly, all political promises and pledges are variable by circumstances. Secondly, their interpretation rests with them. Thirdly, they can easily explain to you that it is to your advantage and to your interest that they should not fulfil their promises or carry out their pledges. Their intentions are always benevolent. They exist and exert themselves only for the benefit of humanity and advance of civilization. When concerned, they bring in the theory of trust. They are trustees and in the discharge of their trust they must remain in possession of your country and have full control over your purse. They must supply your poor people with cheap goods. No one understood them better than Charles Stewart Parnell. Parnell's biographer has in one place explained what the great Irish leader thought of the English.[4] He says :

"He (Parnell) regarded the moral sermons preached by the English statesmen and publicists as the merest cant. Morality was the last thing the English thought of in their dealings with Ireland.... There are men who can readily argue themselves into the belief that whatever serves this purpose is moral."

Speaking of English parties, Parnell remarked in one of his speeches :—

"I have always endeavoured to teach my countrymen, whether at home or abroad, the lesson of self-reliance. I do not depend upon English political parties. I should advise you not to depend upon any such party. I do not depend upon good wishes of any section of the English....I have never known any important section of any country, who have assumed the Government of another country, to awaken to the real necessities of the position until compelled to do so."

These sentiments were repeated by him on more than one occasion. Events have justified his opinions. What was true in the case of Ireland—a country of white Christiansis—is even truer in the case of India. For any Indian nationalist to build any hopes

on the English sense of justice, or on English promises and pledges, or on English morality, is the merest moonshine and pure delusion. The lessons of English History are writ large on the map of the world. Any reliance upon the English for our emancipation is, therefore, out of the question. Let us once for all understand that there is no use in deceiving ourselves.

Not that the characteristics of the British people belong to them alone. All empire-building peoples have and must have them, to a greater or less extent.

All these declarations or pronouncements about responsible government by instalments or by stages are mere camouflage. You can be slaves by degrees, but you cannot be free by degrees. The idea is absurd. Let us frankly face the situation. We are slaves, we want to be free. In order to be free, we must have compelling force behind us. It need not be physical force. To think of physical force in the existing conditions and circumstances is folly. The force we want to generate is the force of national will. We must form, guide and control the national will in such a way as to make it irresistible. In this task we can expect no help from the British. We all have to do our work ourselves, in our own way. It would be foolish to seek the help of the British for this end, or to rely on their help. It is not to their interest to help us in gaining power, and they never do a thing which is not to their interest—Why should they? We should be prepared for the bitterest opposition from them. In opposing the formation, the expression and the assertion of our national will, they will use all the means and the power at their disposal to thwart us, to crush us and to convince us of our 'folly'. They will use all the forces of their 'law'. But over and above that, they will even use violence and have recourse to all the powers they possess regardless of legal forms. Above all, they will divide us and use our own people against us. They will appeal to the self-interest of the big landlords, the big bankers, the big lawyers, the big manufacturers and the big officials among us and seek their co-operation for crushing the national will. They will make frantic appeals to our 'patriotism' and to our 'moderation' also. Yes, they will invoke the very name of our country in order to induce us to desist from what they call our 'folly', 'madness' and even 'treachery'.

Patriots, they will denounce as traitors, and the latter they will honour as patriots. And the worst is that they will succeed (in fact, they have already succeeded) in winning over a good many of our patriots and publicists to their side. Remember the best, the ablest and the most cunning among us are no match for them. They know these arts to perfection. They have practised them for centuries and for generations. The ablest and the cleverest among us are mere children in politics in their presence. We are no match for them in argument, in dissimulation, in diplomacy, in tactics, in political strategy and in negotiations. The first and the foremost duty of an Indian patriot is to keep at a distance from them, to cultivate the strength of will necessary to resist the tempter within and without, to keep his record clean and to refuse all preferment, privileges and places which they offer. It is no honour to join the foreign rulers of one's country to strengthen their rule, to maintain and enhance their prestige, to become the instruments of their will to degrade and exploit ourselves. The honours they confer on us and the places and the privileges they bestow are the price of our shame and the evidence of our subjection. There is no analogy between a foreign government, even though benevolent and liberal, with a national government, even though despotic and monarchical. The interests of the foreigner are always opposed to yours ; those of the latter are opposed to you only in certain places. The first is foreign rule, the other may be class rule. You can reform only the latter. The latter may be oppressive, brutal and barbarian ; but the former is unnatural, a denial of your very existence as a nation, a deliberate attempt to reduce you to the position of beasts of burden. It is deceiving oneself to think that a foreign rule can be reformed. The more benevolent a foreign rule, the more dangerous it must be for your national existence, if it makes you forget your servitude, as it generally does. Let us not forget our own chains. There can be no willing co-operation between a foreign government and a subject people. Let us not hug our yoke to our bosom and be proud of it simply because it is gilded and velveted.

Oh, the folly, the insanity, the self-deception involved in deluding ourselves into the belief that we are serving our country and discharging our duties as the patriotic sons of India while we serve a foreign government. To help our masters in tightening our

chains by repressive measures, and be their instruments in insulting, harassing and imprisoning our countrymen whose only fault is that they are clear-headed and strong-willed enough not to be deluded into false hopes of self-government by stages and not to be tempted by offers of high offices—that is not patriotism.

While reading the life of Charles S. Parnell by K. B. O'Brien, I came upon an incident which seems to me to be very pertinent to the position of those Indians who call themselves Liberals. Describing the interview which Mr. O'Brien, the biographer of Mr. Parnell, had with Mr. Gladstone about the prospects of the general election of 1885 in Ireland, he says :

"I spoke of the Irish Liberals and said that they would be swept off the board." "Irish Liberals," said Mr. Gladstone, with an expression of sublime scorn which I shall never forget, "Irish Liberals! Are there any Liberals in Ireland ? Where are they ? I must confess . that I feel a great deal of difficulty in recognising these Irish Liberals you talk about and—(in delightfully scoffing accents, and with an intonation which has often charmed me in the House of Commons)—I think Ireland would have a good deal of difficulty in recognising them either (laughing ironically)."

I hope the reader can appreciate the ironical laughter of the great Liberal leader of England. What did he mean ? Nothing short of this, that a subject country could only have "Nationalists" or "Tories" and nothing between them. For my own part, I maintain that the Indians who call themselves 'Liberals' are doing great injustice to themselves. The great bulk of them are "Nationalists' to the very core of their being. There is a small section of office-bearers, place-hunters and indifferent men who are neither 'Liberals' nor 'Nationalists'. They are reactionaries, pure and simple, who are taking shelter behind formulas which have been the refuge of men of their way of thinking in all times, in all ages and in all countries. What are these cries ?

'Peace in danger.'
'Law and order in danger.'
'Property in danger.'
'Revolution as against evolution.'

Ghosts of anarchy, chaos and disorder visit them every night.

Poor souls! They do not think that evolution and revolution are not antagonistic terms. Evolution always ends in revolution. There can be no revolution without evolution. The birth of a child is a revolution that follows evolution. Revolution is after all not such a dreadful thing. It is a phenomenon which nature loves and without which there can be no progress, either in nature or in human affairs. It has always been a terror to the holders of power and privilegs, though it has always defied the machinations of the latter and put in its appearance in due time. We are certainly aiming at a revolution, although a non-violent one, not in defiance of the laws or processes of evolution. Let them criticise our methods as 'dangerous', 'bad' 'harmful' and 'inadequate', but let them not indulge in this silly talk of evolution against revolution. For revolution is but rapid evolution.

As to law and order, I have already shown that British laws have in ethics, and according to the latest juristic theory, no binding force upon us. What is the aim and object of our life? What is the end we are striving for? The freedom of our country : its emancipation in order to constitute itself into a sovereign nation for the good of all the communities forming the nation, as well as for the good of the human race. The extent to which the British laws help us in the attainment of these objects is the measure of our loyalty to them. We may even go a step further and say that to the extent to which they do not stand in the way of our attainment of these objects, we shall respect them, but not beyond that. Wherever we feel that loyalty to British laws is a hindrance in the way of our work for the formulation, expression and assertion of the national will, we must disregard them and suffer the consequences of such disobedience.

All law and order are only means to an end. The peace and order produced and preserved by foreign bayonets is no peace and order. It is an unnatural state of things. It is the peace of death. An order maintained by foreign rule is not the kind of order which leads to progress. Love of such an order and such a peace implies such a kind of shame and humiliation as to make life itself an intolerable burden. Even under a national government there is always a limit to the desire of order and peace.

"The only justification for a claim by government of its obedience is the clear proof that it satisfies the material and moral claim of those over whom it exercises control. We cannot wander on blindly with self-shut eyes, merely because order is convenient.... It is in the highest degree difficult to understand what exactly is gained by the empty existence that the state must be strong without giving the valid demonstration of the purpose for which that strength is to be used. Government is only a convention, which men, on the whole, accept because of a general conviction that its effort is for good. Where the machine breaks down, where the purpose of those who drive it becomes to an important class sinister, it is humanly inevitable that an effort towards change should be made. To those who hold the reins of power it was, perhaps, inevitable that such an effort should be regarded as the coronation of anarchy. To oppose the government is, for them, to destroy the state."

In another place, the same writer discusses the evils of absolutism in self-governed nations. He says :

"To make the state omni-competent is to leave it at the mercy of any group that is powerful to exploit it. That has been, indeed, one of the main historical causes of social interest....The supreme interest of the state is in justice and it does not necessarily follow that justice and order are in perfect correlation."

To those who have any understanding of the real meaning of politics, this is only its A.B.C., but unfortunately a long subjection and the servile mentality that results therefrom have made us incapable of understanding the elementary truths. It has stunted our minds and dwarfed our intellects. Our lawyers and jurists are still being fed on the exploded and time-barred theories of Austin and Hegel. They have acquired the legal habit and the legal mind of looking at everything in terms of positive law without the exactness of thought and the logic that insists on law. The most important fact which our lawyers always fail to remember is that the laws for which our implicit loyalty is being claimed were never made by us, nor the state which that government represents. The state and the government that have made these laws, have in the making of these laws practically ignored us and our nation. These laws were made by them and in the interest of their rule.

We or our people were no parties to their making. Consequently these laws have no *moral* claim on our allegiance. When the British-made laws are based on ethical laws, one is, no doubt, *morally* bound to obey them. Let us clear our minds of all camouflage and cant and face the facts as they are. The government and their laws are not of our making. They are not responsible to us. They do not recognise our right to alter them. Even the Reforms lay emphasis on the fact that they owe their birth not to any desire or wish of ours, but to the goodwill of the British—"the faith that is in us," as they call it in the Montagu-Chelmsford report. The Reforms do not recognise our right to national sovereignty, or even to our existence as a consciously independent political entity. The difference between 'votable' and 'non-votable' items of state expenditures tells its own tale. In face of these facts what we need are not *Reforms*, but rebirth and reconstruction. As a nation we have been dead. Our present attempt is to be reborn. The fact of our rebirth will be computed a revolution, but it will not take place unless and until we have passed through years and months of preparatory evolution. The preparatory evolution will involve much suffering and distress, much forbearance and patience, much nausea and pain. All this we all must put up with if we want to be reborn. The process of rebirth is a process of pain but nothing can come into existence without pain. In this period of preparatory evolution it is no business of ours to help the operation of forces that are opposed to our rebirth. If there are any who have not the strength and the courage to help the processes of evolution, let them stand aloof and watch the development. But to be active agents in the hands of your opponents is a sight at once depressing and exasperating. It is time that 'Liberal' Indians should throw away their pseudo-liberalism and don on the armour of pure and simple nationalism. Liberalism is a discredited creed in Europe. It is hypocritical disguise for capitalistic Imperialism. There are some good men among English Liberals, as there are some even among Tories, but Liberalism as a creed is dead and buried. It is a creed which appeals only to old women in a state of decay and disintegration. To those young and alive it does not appeal. Moreover, there is no occasion yet for a distinction between Liberals and 'non-Liberals' in India. The time for these party labels will come when we have established a real live Sovereign Parliament, with

power to make and unmake governments. At present the title is a mere mimicry. However we may differ in our methods, we are all nationalists. The only other possible party is that of the loyalists who want the present system to be perpetuated and who are opposed to our national regeneration.

I have so far discussed the fundamental implications of our political position. The conclusions at which I arrived may be thus summarised :

1. That being a subject people and not a sovereign nation, we have no power to make laws ; nor have we a constitution which owes its existence or its evolution to the sovereign will of the nation.

2. That the nation and the state which impose their sovereign rule on us are those of Great Britain.

3. That the laws in force in British India have been made by the British and as such, not owing their origin or the sanction to the sovereign will of our nation, are not morally binding on us ; that politically no nation owes any allegiance to laws not made by it, either directly or indirectly through its representatives ; that our allegiance to British-made laws comes not from our consent, but from the compelling force of the might of the British government and that the Government of India is a government established by British law and not by any law made by us.

4. That a government imposed on us by a foreign state, by the force of its might is not subject to any changes by our will, as long as we do not evolve and assert our irresistible national will, which should compel the government to look to us for its authority and power.

5. That our first and foremost duty is to evolve and assert such a will.

6. That it is futile to think of reforming a foreign government and meaningless to talk of constitutional agitation for the purpose.

7. That the Reform Act of 1919 has made no change in our political stutus. In fact, it has emphasised our subject condition and established it as a formula for the future.

8. That we owe no co-operation to such a government, nor can our co-operation with them in any way affect and improve our political position.

9. That our co-operation with such a government to maintain what is called 'law and order' and to repress and harass those who are engaged in the task of forming a national will is an act of disloyalty to our own people and to our country.

10. That 'law and order' are only means to an end ; there have been times when in the interests and for the good of the nation, as well as the protection of the fundamental liberties of the individual and the community, they have been disregarded even by the citizens of a sovereign state ; that such times may recur ; that both modern theory and practice deny the absolute 'omni-competence of the state' which should make it obligatory on everyone to bend its will under all circumstances and for all purposes ; and that a government can only derive its authority from the nation it governs and so must be responsible to it for all its acts.

It may be said in reply that this is all very well in abstract theory but it is not practical politics. Practical politics require that we should win the goodwill of the ruling race, use their laws for the purpose of strengthening our position, accept their service in order to get experience in the work of administration and in the meantime build up the nation. Also that being militarily helpless, depending on the British for the defence of our borders and for the protection of our hearths and homes, it is no use our pining for the moon and applying the political theories of sovereign nations to our conditions. It is also said that differences of race and religion and the jealousies and rivalries that arise therefrom are such effective hindrances in the way of our national unity as to make the work of formulation and assertion of the national will extremely difficult, if not altogether impossible, and that pending the attainment of this national unity it is better for us to be governed by the British than to run the risk of being dominated and exploited by some other nation. It is added that in the present state of world politics it is impossible for a country like India to remain free even if the British leave us, and that in that event Japan or Afghanistan or some other power is bound to step in and take us in hand. There are some, who place an implicit faith in the sense of justice of the British, who believe that the

British are quite honest and sincere in their promises and pledges and that now that they have promised to give us Dominion status within as short a time as possible, it is for us to use our opportunities in such a way as to disram opposition and criticism and to inspire faith in our capacity, loyalty and reasonableness. These latter often talk of "ordered progress" and warn their countrymen of the dangers of a revolution and the misery that comes in its train. They hold up the France of 1789 and the Russia of the last few years as examples of revolutionary disasters. Their watchword is 'Progress, steady though slow'.

Some of these points are quite weighty and cogent ; others have only a substratum of truth : the rest are absolutely fallacious, based on that lack of individual and national self-confidence which accounts for the continued subordination and passive acquiescence in conditions of national humiliation of large populations to a mere handful of strong-willed and assertive foreigners. It may be true that theories would not help us unless we create facts to accord with those theories.

The European Imperialists maintain that the theories evolved by Western thinkers in their progress towards perfection and enduring democracy are not applicable to Eastern conditions of life. Not only political theories but conditions of life too, are so different to make the Western notions of freedom and democracy unsuitable to the people of the East. Consequently, say they, there is no analogy between the countries of the West and the East. If this argument were true, it would knock the bottom out of the theory of Self-government by stages or by instalments. In a few years, as say ten or twenty or even fifty, the East will not be so changed as to become fit to work out Western ideas of democracy. And if it does change so rapidly and so completely, it will be an evil day for humanity. By the time the East changes so as to be fit for the political institutions and ideas which are current today in the West, the latter itself would be entirely changed and might be on a different track altogether. Are we born only to follow and imitate the West, and always to remain at a distance from it even when so following and imitating ? Are we quite sure that the West is after all on the right track and deserves the intellectual, the political and the economic leadership of the world for all times to come ?

Are we quite sure that these people—the Vincents and the Haileys of the Indian government, the Butlers and Lloyds of the provinces[5]—are the right persons to lead us to the gates of the democratic harem ? Are they distinterested enough, even if intelligent and able, for that rule ? Are they superior to the Asquiths, Balfours, Chamberlains and the Lloyd Georges of their native island ? If the latter have made a mess of their own country's affairs and have brought it to the verge of bankruptcy and civil war, what guarantee is there that their prototypes in India will do better ? Is there any reason for us to believe that the British Indian rulers and proconsuls, who in the majority of cases have risen to these high positions from the ranks of a bureaucracy, the most despotic and the most cunning that the world has known, are morally better men than the Lloyd Georges, Winston Churchills, Curzons and Chamberlains of Great Britain ? The whole past history of Great Britain, the story of its dealings with its colonies in America, Africa and Asia, its diplomatic record in Europe, its dealings with coloured people all over the globe, should put us on our guard against taking its words, promises and pledges on their face value. The truth is that the British are neither worse, nor better than the other Imperial races of the past and the present. They would not be Imperialists, if they were different from what they are. It may be that sometimes, even as Imperialists, they are guilty of blunders, but to say so is only to admit that after all they are human. There would be no escape from Imperialistic clutches if there were no blundering Imperialists. The case of its victims would indeed be hopeless if Imperialism were always served by the best, the cleverest and the most virtuous of men. It is an affection which carries with it the seeds of its own destruction.

To the relief of the dependent and enslaved people, such seeds rapidly fructify when they are watered by Imperialists of the type of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer. They rouse these victims to a sense of danger as nothing else does. But Imperialism, at its best, has in itself certain inherent characteristics which bring about its downfall. These are the greed and the lust of power which makes its votaries reckless, haughty, inhuman and overbearing. Even the best of the Imperialists is an enemy of human liberities. Any alliance with him is an alliance with the powers of evil. Submission to

Imperialistic rule on the part of a weak and powerless people, their inability to rise against it, the refusal of their leaders to undertake a campaign of violent opposition to it, are entirely different from an alliance with it. The former is the result of their helplessness and impatience ; the latter, the evidence of their degeneration. Only a fool or a knave can believe that Imperialists desire the alliance or the co-operation of the leaders of the subject peoples with the object of their own overthrow. We can understand the argument that being militarily helpless, disunited, uneducated and lacking in qualities of head and heart, which are necessary to enable a subject people to assert their national will and set up a government of their own, it is best for them to proceed with care and to avoid attempting things which might prematurely bring them into violent conflict with the rulers. One can appreciate the argument that under the circumstances the best thing for a subject people is to take advantage of the opportunities that are left to them of consolidating, educating and organising themselves for the day of liberation. One can even comprehend the argument that it is better to put up with the humiliation of being a subject people than attempt freedom by force resulting in enormous bloodshed. But one cannot understand how a member of a subject people can make an alliance with the rulers in order to make their rule more effective, more popular, more enduring and still claim to be a sincere patriot desiring the freedom of his country. The two things are entirely incompatible and inconsistent. Once it is admitted that Imperialism is an evil and a negation of the fundamental rights of the dependent and subject people, any compromise with it, which carries an acquiescence in its methods and a continuance of the system, must be condemned. There can be no Empire without dependent and subject peoples. For these subject or dependent peoples to aspire to a position of partnership in the Empire is an act of disloyalty to the subject country, as it involves condonation of the principle of Imperialism and a denial of the rights of other peoples to be free and self-governing. Accepting the *fact* of foreign rule and acquiescing in its continuance one may for personal ends accept the service of such foreign government, but one can never be a servant and an ally at the same time. A slave may negotiate with his msater for his freedom, but he can never be an ally.

Leaving aside the theoretical discussions let us deal with

concrete facts. There is nothing in the history of British rule in India which justifies the assumption that the Indians in the service of the British have even by a hundredth of an inch advanced the cause of their country's freedom. On the other hand, there is plenty of evidence that even the best, the most conscientious and the most 'patriotic' of them have been used as tools by the British bureaucracy to enact repressive laws, to administer repressive laws and to apologise for their proceedings on behalf of their masters under what is termed 'ordered progress'. Is it progress ordered from above ? Then what is progress ? Does the railway mileage represent progress, or do the figures of imports and exports connote progress ? Does a big army and a heavy budget indicate progress, or is the increase in the number of government officials a sign of progress ? Do magnificent buildings, erected at public expense by a foreign government, to bespeak their glory, represent progress ? All this may be 'progress' in a certain sense, yet may also be evidence of the utter helplessness of the people with whose money and at whose cost all this progress is achieved. France was at the zenith of her glory under Louis XIV, but can it be said that that was progress ? The Mogul Empire reached its highest pinnacle under Aurangzeb. Was it progress ? Russia was a formidable power under Czar Nicholas II. Its Government was most zealous in maintaining law and order. Most of its gifted sons were in exile, either in foreign countries or in Siberia. Freedom of speech, freedom of worship and freedom of association were denied to the people in the name of law and order. Yet the Russians in the employ of the Czar, all stood for progress, and only aimed at 'ordered progress'. How often have law and order been used to cover tyranny and oppression ? If the will of the despot is law and the maintenance of that law is order, then have 'law and order' been vindicated by all governments, at all times in history, even by the most tyrannical and the most cruel among them ; then there was never any justification for revolt against government authority, however mild its form. Let us assume for the sake of argument that the British Indian government is a national government of our own. Let us forget that it is a foreign government. What would be our duty if such a government passed a Rowlatt Act under the circumstances it did, or committed an outrage, or applied the Criminal Amendment Act to the Indian National Congress, or proclaimed the Seditious Meetings Act, or gagged the press. I contend that a self-respecting, progressive, democratic people would

have done exactly what we have done under the circumstances, perhaps even more.

"The supreme interest of the State is in justice and it does not necessarily follow that justice and order are in perfect co-relation." There are times when the business of law is not the maintenance of an old equilibrium but the creation of a new one. Let those Indians who talk so glibly of 'law and order' and 'ordered progress' remember that in the advance of humanity 'few things are more fatal than the triumph of authority over truth'. On these notions of law and order, as they are entertained by some of our countrymen, it would be impossible for any country to make any advance towards freedom. Even in self-governed countries, freedom is not a stationary thing. It is always progressing. And wherever the governments are not sufficiently responsive to the new ideas of freedom entertained by the people, the latter have to enforce their point of view on the governing class or classes by not making a fetish of 'law and order'. Says Laski : "Wherever, in a state, a group of persons large enough to make its presence felt demands the recognition of certain claims, it will not recognise a law which attempts defiance of them ; nor will it accept the authority by which the law is enforced." This is not a new political maxim, but one which is amply corroborated by the facts of history. These principles acquire even greater force, when considered in relation to a country which is being governed by the will of a foreign state which denies even elementary freedom to the people it governs. Let it not be forgotten even for a minute that, with us, it is not a question of the expansion of our liberties, but it is a question of *our being born a free nation.* A nation governed by another has no liberties, exeept such as are allowed to it by its masters, either as a matter of grace or enlightened self-interest. These are not liberties, but concessions which may any time be withdrawn by the power that granted them. The point is being emphsised from day to day by the Anglo-Indian Press and is the fundamental basis of the Reforms Act of 1919. But what we, the nationalists, are after, are not *concessions* but *rights.* At present we have no rights. It is a matter of great humiliation that even the best intellects in the country cannot see this point. They feel no shame in talking of concessions, in asking for them, and in agitating for them. This creates a solid wall of principles between the nationalists and the moderates. The former are constructivists, the latter are mere

reformers. The former want a rebirth, the latter a mere continuance though under better conditions, of their present subordinate life. The former want the people to come to theirs—by their own efforts; the latter want a kind Providence to throw their crumbs from its beautiful table. The former are 'rightarians', if I may coin such a word, and the latter 'charitarians'. What we want is *evolution from below*, what our opponents are after is *a gift from above*. What the nationalists assert is the *right of manhood* for which they are prepared to pay the price; what the moderates seek is *a condition of gilded bondage to develop into manhood at some future time, without much trouble in the process*. The moderates in their supreme wisdom often label 'nationalists' as 'impatient visionaries' and 'revolutionaries', and themselves as apostles of 'ordered progress' and 'evolutionaries'. The fact is that they do not understand what national evolution implies and involves. Acquiescence in the existing order and dependence on the benevolence of those whose imperial interest is opposed to our national evolution is not seeking progress by evolution. A subject people cannot evolve into a self-governing nation unless it is prepared to struggle for it. The struggle does not consist in seeking office and in accepting honours from those who do not believe either in your right or in your capacity to determine the steps in your evolution, and who insist that they and they alone must be judges of these steps. It is travesty of language to call that evolution. Intelligent evolution assumes active and intelligent struggle. The nation will never evolve into a self-governing state if it were to follow the methods of the moderates. The latter deny the people a right to assert their rights and to put forth energy to enforce them, if by doing so they have to do things which are displeasing and disconcerting to their political masters. To win their political and economic freedom by the willing consent of their masters is their goal. To win our political and economic freedom in spite of other party's denial of our rights, and in spite of its wish to keep us out of them, is our effort. In this effort a certain amount of conflict is inevitable. The best amongst us are determined not to let that conflict lead to bloodshed; but to let that conflict be determined by considerations of mere legality is to show one's ignorance of both nature and history. The fact is that the moderates are not democratic at all. They do not care for the people. What they are aiming at is power for a few. They seem to be afraid of

the people. They do not want the people to get strong and acquire the power of asserting and enforcing their will. They want to impose their will on them. This they can only do by an alliance with the authorities. The latter are prepared to share their power with a class of Indians, whom they can easily coerce or please, but they do not want the people to develop power and strength and unity. The tragedy of the thing, however, lies in the fact that the moderates cannot see this. They believe, many of them quite honestly and sincerely, that they are all working *for the people* and in their interest. The difference between the two parties is thus not one of speed, nor of mere method, but of fundamental principles.

Power from above is a two-edged sword. It is more demoralising and corrupting than power from below. The former breeds insolence, pride, helplessness and narrowed vision ; the latter teaches humility, forbearance, constant vigilance and constant sacrifice. The former depends on the pleasure of a few, the latter on the pleasure of many. It is true that in the hands of small people the latter also may lead to, demoralisation and corruption. But the first spoils even *the best* of men. It is the most dangerous thing for a member of a subject race to share power with their rulers. It is liable to make them mere tools of the latter, even against their will.

As for experience in administration, this is again a shibboleth. What experience had Lord Reading or Dr. Sapru, or Mr. (now Sir Mohammed) Shafi or Mr. Sarma[6] ? What experience had Lord Peel ?

Let me not be misunderstood. I am no advocate of rashness or fool-hardiness. Let us be careful by all means ; but carefulness does not mean procrastination or subservience. Let us lead the nation on the *right lines*, however slow the progress may be, but for God's sake let us not confirm their slavish mentality and habits of acquiescence and passivity by our own *narrow-mindedness and narrow vision.*

11. THE CONGRESS PROGRAMME—UNTOUCHABILITY AND LABOUR

As to the best method of evolving a common will, I have some constructive suggestions to make, but before I come to them, I must discuss some of the items of the Congress programme and examine their basic implications.

The items as to untouchability and the organization of labour are also clear indications of our ideals of democracy. Untouchability is the result of prejudice against certain kinds of labour. It may include certain elements of religious and social prejudice. We have to remove both. No prejudice of any kind can be permitted to vitiate our future democracy. We do not propose to secure our end by a process of levelling down, but by that of levelling up. Our ideas of 'equality' are not based on the theory of 'natural rights', but on that of service. No form of labour is degrading which serves social ends which society needs. If there are any forms of labour which involve the degradation of the individual or groups of individuals, they must be either abolished or the element of degradation must be removed therefrom. No one should suffer humiliation because of his performing functions, and doing services which serve a social purpose, but have by a curious twist of the human mind been made the reason of their performers and their class being looked down upon by the rest of the community. No one should be looked down upon because of his labour, or his religion or his race. Every human being who has his home in India, whatever his race or

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religion or occupation, is an Indian, a member of the Indian Nation, and entitled to be treated as an equal among equals.

Some people object to the inclusion of this item in our political programme because they say 'this is encroaching on Dharma or religion.' But even a superficial examination of the question shows that either the objectors do not properly realise the meaning and scope of 'Dharma', or their ideas of political liberty are hopelessly muddled. It is impossible to think of a democracy which recognises 'untouchability' as a part of one's individual 'Dharma' or as a permissible form of religious or social prejudice, it is useless to talk of a democratic state as long as this kind of prejudice sways our minds and influences our conduct towards those from whom we differ in religion, or whose forms of occupation we dislike. Some people condemn this item on the ground of expediency or policy, but one cannot remain silent on a basic principle of this kind for reason of expediency or policy. The process of building up a nation is a moral process. You cannot engage in a work of this kind with success by practisting duplicity. If you want the people as a whole to join your movement, you must take each and all into confidence. You must tell them frankly and truly what you think of them and how you propose to associate with them in the great work before you. If you start with reservations of this kind, you weaken the very foundation of your structure and pollute the very source of your vitality. It is sufficiently humiliating that we should have to include untouchability at all in our programme, but to have avoided it for fear of offending the sensibilities of some classes of our countrymen would have been immeasurably worse. It would have been immoral. The democratic mind must clear itself of all such prejudices. The inclusion of this item in our programme does not imply that the Congress proposes to elevate the untouchables or to raise them up in the social scale. Nothing of the kind.

It will be wrong on our part to look upon them as objects of pity or sympathy. It is a kind of presumption, which must be given up if we are to evolve a truly democratic mind. We simply declare our faith and pledge ourselves to act in the light of that faith on our own part. This is a step in self-education and self-elevation, a preparation for Swaraj, filling up of the preliminaries of democracy, and not an act of patronage towards the untouchables. In all such

cases the work before us is one of education, association and organization. First we educate ourselves, next we give our ideas to others and more particularly to the persons concerned and offer such help as circumstances permit us to render. We first communicate our faith and our ideas to them, and then by actively associating with them enable them to organise themselves efficiently. It may be that for a time the duty of guiding them would devolve on us, which should in no way be shirked, but eventually they themselves must lead their movement and try to come into line with the rest of their countrymen—to take their share of the country's work. The work is not to be undertaken in a spirit of charity, but under an impending sense of duty—not duty towards them but duty towards ourselves, because we cannot be free unless they too are free. To evolve a democracy, to constitute a free State, to develop Swaraj is impossible unless all parts of the nation are in a position to make their contribution to the common purpose, the common will and the common work.

The same spirit must govern our relations with or towards labour. The labour problem has several sides. In essence, it is an economic problem, but it is social and political too. Labour must come into its own before the world can be truly democratic. The present condition is barbaric. The producers of wealth are the poorest, the most backward and the most miserable of all the human beings composing the nation.

If there is anything in European civilization which we should, under no circumstances, imitate and copy, it is their economic life and their industrialism, their commercialism and class divisions. It would be far better for us to remain a comparatively poor nation than to become rich by the wholesale introduction into our country of European industrialism. Most of us are familiar with the pictures of Industrial Europe drawn by Socialist writers of all schools. The work was started by Karl Marx. His prognostications have turned out to be so true that now there is a practical unanimity among Western thinkers about the indescribable evils of the system.

What is Socialism ? In essence, it is a protest against the degradation to which the working part of humanity has been reduced by the enjoying part of it. We in India are as much the victims of this evil as the rest of the world. Modern Industrialism and modern Imperialism are twin sisters. The one follows the other. Europe

and America are only democratic in name. They may have a veneer of democracy about them, but the spirit which dominates their life is that of Imperialism. Capitalism is only another form of Imperialism. Capitalistic Great Britain, in her benevolence and by 'virtue of the faith in us' which she possesses, has so far given us only a small dose of the elixir which has been her own 'making'. It is no fault of ours that she has not given us the full dose, though we have been clamouring for it most insistently and most regretfully. She has been rather miserly in this matter, not because she wanted to save us from its evil effects, but because her own material interests did not allow her to be more liberal. We wanted very much to build our industries on the same lines as she built hers. We have built some. And if we have not built to our heart's cantent, it is because she would not let us. But as a consequence of what she has allowed us to do we have already a labour problem on hand. Our economic ideals are represented symbolically by the *khaddar* movement (hand-spun and hand-woven cloth). I will deal with it in its proper place. In this place, I have referred to it only because it is intimately related to the labour problem.

I am afraid that placed as we are we cannot altogether shut out Industrialism, and if we cannot shut it out, what we have to do is to be prepared to face the consequences. Organising labour on the lines it has been done in Europe is one of the consequences. In our eyes organizing labour means placing them in a position to meet organized capital on such terms that the latter may not be able to take advantage of their ignorance and their disorganized state. Here again it is a question of education and association. What we have to do, and to do quick, is to provide for them facilities of education and association. They must be trained to think for themselves and to take up their proper place in the nation that we are proposing to build. I notice that there is some difference of opinion on the question whether we should use labour organization for political purposes. In my humble judgment the question does not arise. Who are we to use labour organization for political purposes or for any at all ? The units of these organizations are as much 'we' as the others. If some of us are better educated, more experienced and better trained in the work of organization, then all we can do, and should do, is to place our education, our experience and our training at the disposal of our less fortunate brethren in order to help and

guide them in the work before them. To think of using them for any purpose whatsoever is presumption unworthy of the great aim we have in view. Nor do I believe that there is any non-co-operator leader who means as much. What they mean is that labour organizations are as much interested in the movement for Swaraj as any other class of the great population inhabiting this land, and that as such, it is or will be their duty when they are well organized, to take part in the struggle for it.

There are some among us who believe that the class war between capital and labour is already on ; that in this war, Indian labour should fight on the same lines and should conduct itself in the same way as European labour has done ; that there is no possibility of an integration of the differences that exist between labour and capital ; and that labour in India should take as active a part in bringing about a revolution in India, as European labour is taking or threatens to take in Europe. There are others among us who believe that we should do all we can to keep out the class war that is threatening the destruction of European civilization. Can we do it ? If so, how ? Of course we cannot even think of doing so if it involves any diminution of the status of labour in the democracy we propose to build up. Better war than any degradation of human beings or human dignity. But is class war the last word on the subject ? Are not European and American thinkers engaged in a serious attempt to find out a peaceful solution of the problem ? Shall we not do well to study that thought to see if it can help us ? Should we not ask both capital and labour in India to assimilate that thought and take timely steps to prevent the development of the present differences into a class war ?

Again, can't we agree to put a stop to the further development of this industrialism in India, so that the coming danger may be confined to a limited area and to limited numbers ? This would only be possible if we were free to determine our economic policy without any dictation from without, and with an eye to our interest alone. It cannot be done under a regime of free trade ; nor can it be done with the doctrine of *laissez faire* ruling supreme ; nor can it be done if we are obsessed by the interests of an industrially run Empire.

Now a word as to what 'Khaddar' stands for. India has, from time immemorial, been a land of cottage industries. Before the advent of the British, we not only manufactured for our own needs

but catered for the nicest taste in the world. We should have no prejudice against machine such as can be used in cottages and without much mechanical skill to mend and repair it when out of order. We do not want to make profit out of other peoples' wants. Why then should we go in for mass production ? It would be an ideal condition of life for us if we could have a democracy pledged to "simple living and high thinking" in which working for wages was reduced to the minimum and in which we might be practically self-sufficient without being exclusive. We do not want to be isolated. We desire to have the fullest and the most intimate relations with the rest of the world, but we must be an equal among equals, neither, dominant nor dependent.

That is our ideal of a free democratic India. The least we can do is to spread our ideal and to educate our people in it. The 'Khaddar' represents our economic ideal—production for individiual needs, for the needs of the family, the city and the nation ; production by hand and with the aid of simple tools and simple machinery, production for use ; production virtually by all classes and grades of society in the nation; production in homes and in shops as distinguished from big factories, with freedom to the producer to sell his goods in the open market, at the best prices he can get, independent of the capitalist. We will keep competition in check by co-operative methods—co-operation in production and co-operation in distribution. To some people this might look 'primitive' retrogression, going backward. But the world never goes back, though it may seem to do so. The progress in mechanical processes made in the 18th and 19th centuries must be used for the good of humanity, and not for the exploitation of the greater bulk of it by a few fortunate ones in possession of the means to use it for profit, and for power. To let this power be concentrated in a few hands involves the greatest misfortune that can befall mankind. The subject is so well and so exhaustively discussed in social treatises and works of independent thinkers like Mr. Bertrand Russel, Mr. J. A. Hobosn and others, that it will be a presumption on my part to try to reproduce thoughts in my language. All that I intended to do was to explain our economic ideal and what *khaddar* signifies to us. To a certain extent our ideal differs from theirs. But both have certain elements in common. The rationale of it can be studied in their writings and then applied to our circumstances. It may be that we may have to adopt some of their thoughts; but we should

never forget that our circumstances being so very different from theirs, we cannot fully apply their remedies. Neither they nor we are writing on a clean slate. The structure of their society is different from ours, and so are their history, their traditions and the spirit of their culture. All these must be considered in the building up of our social, economic and political life. Europe and Asia must solve their problems, each in its own way, obtaining such support and help from the other's thought and experiences as is readily adoptable in the light of its particular circumstances and conditions of life and its own ideals. Thus we can join hands in building a new world, without one imposing on the other and without one dominating and exploiting the other.

12. MODERATES AND CONGRESSMEN

SO FAR I have tried to discuss our ideal of democracy from the indications of it given in the Congress programme. I am now going to consider what sort of government we desire for India and how we propose to form it. There are many among our moderate countrymen who probably agree with us in our ideal of democracy, though there is a kind of fundamental difference between them and us as to the means to be adopted to approach or achieve that ideal. For example, they want to remove the untouchability of the untouchables almost in the same spirit in which the foreign Christian missionary wants to do so. For them it is a question of social reform. They will not make it an item and a necessary item of their political propaganda. Their way of doing it is by appealing to the sense of philanthropy of the higher castes and the richer men among their countrymen. They always think and talk of elevating them. I confess that most of the Congressmen, too, do not fully realize the importance of the question, nor develop the necessary spirit, but to my judgment the timidity of the former is greater than the ignorance or lack of understanding of the latter.

Similarly on the labour question, they are in favour of organising labour and are doing valuable work in that line, but here again they are afraid of the true principles that underlie the same. Believers still in the Manchester School of Economics, putting their faith in the industrial methods of the West, they believe in providing legislative protection for labour almost on the same lines on which it has been done in the West. It is like creating a disease and then setting to cure it by symbolic treatment. I have so far not seen one valuable thought emerging out of them to show how they propose

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to prevent the problem becoming as serious in India as it has become in Europe. They have not told us how they would cut it at the roots. A remedial factory law, shorter hours, better sanitation, more light, good creches, efficient inspection and compensation for injuries are very good in their own way, but they are like the symbolic treatment of the average medical man. They have never told us how they would tackle the problem if they had full power to solve it in their own way. What are their economic ideals ? Some of them or rather most of them, including the best of them, gibe at Socialism without telling us how they would save India from Industrialism. In fact we are not sure if they see any evil in Industrialism of the kind Europe has evolved. They are constantly talking of the industrial progress of their country, as if they were dying for the appearing of Manchesters, Liverpools and Birminghams in India. Do we really want the prototypes of these cities in India or what they stand for ? Do they constitute the glory of England ? I have seen all of them, and I have always wished that we may not have them. To raise the Labour problem, and then try to solve it is hardly the way to do it. To apothesize Capitalism to save us from its evil effects is hardly wisdom. To introduce and develop Industrialism and then to build up a Labour party does not appeal to me. It may be that under the present system of government that is the only way ! But, then, why not make a serious attempt to do away with the present form of government. A man cannot call himself 'democratic' and also stand for 'safety first' for this government. Therein comes the fundamental difference between the Moderates and the Congressmen. Their ideals of democracy may include the uplifting of the untouchables and the relief of labour, but that is neither democracy nor the democratic method.

The same lack of principles or the same difference in principles distinguished their political programme. They want reforms ; we want a National State. They want reforms up, we want building up from below. They are after gifts and concessions, we claim what is ours. They want a constitution to be framed for them by the British Legislature, we desire, freedom to do it ourselves. They want to "reform a Government imposed from without by force. We want to make a Government of our own, which would be a natural outcome, if not a full development, of our ideals of democracy. We want a Government of the people to be built up and constituted by the people ; they are trying to get a Government of the people, not by

the mandate or the help or the demand of the people, but by the benevolence of the British. But do they want a Government of the people ? Perhaps in the last resort. At present what they are helping to form, is a combined Government of the foreign Imperialist and the Indian Capitalist—a hybrid which satisfies neither and ignores the people. All their lives they have been cursing the foreign bureaucracy in order to replace it by themselves. At last they have ended by compromising with it and by merging themselves in it. This was inevitable. Their immediate ideals and their methods could only lead them there. To quote a writer speaking of the reformers in the United States (which is already a democracy of the kind our moderate countrymen desire), their methods were three : Change in the form of government (Charters, etc.), the maintenance of 'good' men in office and exhortation to induce the 'people' to elect them." "The idea of 'good' men in office," continues the same author, "was the panacea of many reform associations. They thought that their job was to find three or four 'good' men and then once a year to hypnotize the electorate to 'do their duty', and put the men into office, and then all would go well ; what a futile and childish idea which leaves out of account the whole body of citizenship. The widespread fallacy that good officials made a good city is one which lies at the root of much of our thinking, and insidiously works to ruin our best plans, our most serious efforts. This extraordinary belief in officials, this faith in the panacea of a change of charters, must go ; if our present mechanical Government is to turn into a living, breathing, pulsing life, it must be composed of an entire citizenship educated and responsible."

We also have had 'good' men in office both at White Hall and at Delhi, Calcutta and Bombay. We have had a Morley and a Crew at White Hall ; a Hardinge and a Reading at Delhi ; a Charmichael and a Ronaldshay at Calcutta, a Sydenham and a Willingdon at Bombay.[1] When the Liberals of Great Britain came into power in 1906, with a childish faith in 'good' men, I, on behalf of the Lahore Indian Association cabled to Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman to appoint John Morley to the India Office, little knowing that within a year of his taking office, that 'good' man would deport me to Burma without even the semblance of a trial, and that within five years he would have laws put on the Statute Book which would cut at the root of the few liberties we had before that 'good' man came

into office. (The two Repressive Acts under which I am now in jail, were enacted when he was in office).

But some one might say, all these 'good' men were British. The Moderates agitated for an Indian agency. Very well, substitute 'Indians' for men in the above quotation and you have the present situation. Can any one doubt that almost all the Indians appointed as Councillors and Ministers under the reformed regime are 'good' men? On the whole, the country could not have placed better men into office. What have they done? The question may better be left unanswered. My present belief is that even if the British Parliament had granted us full 'self-government', we would not have done much better. What matters much is not the thing granted but how we get it. I have always believed (and proclaimed my belief from house-tops) that self-government is not a thing to be gifted or granted. If so gifted or granted, it will not be of much value, and we might not be able to retain it, and it is a pleasure to find my idea supported by the latest thought on political theory. Says Mrs. Follet: "It is impossible to give self-government; no one has the right to give it, no one has the power to give it. Self-government must always be grown; sovereignty is always a psychological process."

The old Congress did virtually nothing to create a new psychology for themselves and then to change that of the people. In fact the point of view of the leaders themselves did not indicate any real change in their mentality. They always appealed to the British Cabinet. They addressed themselves to the Government, the rulers. The people had virtually no place in their programme. Is it any wonder, then, that the best of them are still obsessed by a 'slave mentality'? It is not a reproach. It is a fact. They could not give to the people what they did not possess themselves. They could not get rid of the slave mentality unless they changed the process of their thinking. When they say they are not fit for self-government, they speak the truth. When they say the people of India are not fit for self-government they speak only a half-truth. I believe that there is no nation on the earth which is not fit for some sort of self-government.

Fitness for democratic self-government is not acquired by the methods which our moderate leaders want to apply. Fitness for democratic self-government is only developed by the methods which

the new Congress wants to enfore. I call it new in comparison with the Congress of pre-1919 days. To be frank, I am not at all sorry, that 'full self-government' was not given by the Act of 1919. If it had been so granted, we could not have the intense propaganda of 1920-22. Of course it could not have been so given. I am not even sorry that we did not succeed in getting Swaraj by the end of 1921, because if so we could not have the experience of 1922, which was essential for the development of our nationhood on proper lines. Personally I am in no hurry, as I firmly believe that the path we are treading is the right path and that self-government or Swaraj is a psychological process. Everything we are doing, every suffering we are subjected to, every act of repression and suppression helps. What I want is a genuine article and not a spurious or a counterfeit one. Looked at in this light, we are even grateful to our moderate friends for what they have made us go through.

I personally have implicit faith in my ideals and in the general policy we are following to attain those ideals. There will be periods of reaction and sometimes stagnation. There will be what apparently will look repulses and defeats. Enthusiasm may be followed by indifference, intense activity by comparative lethargy, hope by disappointment. But if the idea and the process, the thought and the method, the ideal and the means to achieve it, are laid down on true lines, they will in time fructify. There is no reason for despondency ; there is no room for disappointment. Onward ! Soldiers of Democracy, victory is assuredly yours. It may come soon, it may come late, ripen your thoughts, strengthen your beliefs, invigorate your faith ; give it to others, take it from others ; integrate your differences and create a collective purpose, a collective mind and a collective will and you will win.

13. THE IMMEDIATE NEED FOR SWARAJ

IT IS ALL very well to lay down ideals and principles; the real question comes when you begin to apply them to the actual conditions of life. Have we a clean slate to write upon? Can we begin direct and at once with a truly democratic state *i.e.*, a democracy in the sense we attach to it? Of course, no. The people have to be educated into it and it has to grow. From the very nature of our principles and beliefs, it is impossible to manufacture democracy, at our call. What then should we do in the meantime? Should we acquiesce in the continuance of this autocratic, militaristic, bureaucratic regime, as the Sydenhams and O'Dwyers maintain, until our masses grow into democracy and become fit to enforce their will in the state; or should we accept 'Self-government' by driblets and instalments as Montagus propose to 'give us'? Is there not force in the contention that once the capitalists and the bourgeoisie (or, say the capitalists, the landlords and middle classes) capture power, it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for the masses consisting of the ordinary ryot, the labourer, the small peasant-proprietor and the untouchables, to come into their own? Shall the Government of an Indian bureaucracy be more efficient, liberal and progressive than that of the present bureaucracy of British officials? Will not the Indian capitalist and landlord use his freshly acquired powers to keep down the ryot, the small proprietor, the labourer and the untouchable? Do not the former elements already predominate in the present legislatures?

I am afraid it is impossible to give a positively negative answer to these questions. Why, then, should we be after paralyzing the

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present administration? Why not accept the Moderates' position and join hands with them in working the reforms? Because, we believe that the continuance of the present system of government and any delay in claiming immediate Swaraj, is likely to deepen, the slave psychology we have come to be possessed of. Because we believe that once a people on the way to nationhood become conscious of their degraded political position, any further acquiescence by them in the continuance of it is impossible. Foreign rule saps the moral foundation of the subject people. It unfits them for thinking independently. it destroys their self-respect and their power of initiative; it prevents them from expressing themselves freely; it bars all kinds of effective organization, and fosters habits of dependence. An administration may be thoroughly efficient, absolutely impartial and perfectly just (which the present British administration by no means is), but it may yet be immoral and preventive of a healthy growth of democracy. A nation can afford to have for a time an efficient administration. but a servile state is fatal to healthy growth of life. Organized and legalized anarchy is worse than an unorganized and a spasmodic one. Dyarchy is only another name for absolutism. It is the same bitter pill coated with sugar. As long as the source of power is situated at Whitehall, as long as the 'steel frame' must be supplied by Great Britain, not by the free choice of the people of the country, but under compulsion, as long as the control of the purse and the control of the military is vested in the foreign Secretary of State, so long there can be not even a beginning of the democratic process. We may need friendly guidance, we may welcome friendly advice, but as long as we are ordered from Whitehall it is impossible for us to feel that we have the freedom to grow to our full stature by our own initiative and on our own model. We must feel that the Government is subject to our will, even though it may, after all, be only a class Government.

An Indian bureaucracy or an Indian legislature composed of the landlord, the capitalist and the middle classes, cannot altogether brush aside the wishes of the people as the present administration does. It cannot entirely ignore or defy them. It must consult their wishes and be conciliatory. We want our masses to grow in manliness, in frankness, and in power. not by the methods which the bureaucracy is teaching them, not by learning the alphabets of diplomacy with which they are being vaccinated, but by intelligent self-assertion

and by growing consciousness of their ability to enforce their righteous will. We are not at all confident that an Indian bureaucracy will be more efficient, or more impartial or more conscientious than the present British bureaucracy is, but we are confident that while no amount of public opinion can bend the latter, the former will have to bend. No Indian bureaucracy would have dared to pass a Rowlatt Act or to write the report of the majority of the Hunter Committee ; or to decide the Punjab affair as the British Cabinet did. No Indian bureaucracy would have committed the blunders of the Guru-ka-Bagh affair.[1] No Indian bureaucracy would have dared to use force to disperse peaceful volunteers as was done last year. No Government can conduct its affairs without officials. A bureaucracy like the present is distinguished from an ordinary body of officials by its exclusiveness, by its caste-like organization and by its extraordinary ideas of prestige. There are permanent officials in Great Britain and in the United States, but you cannot call them a bureaucracy. They do not possess the charactristics of a bureaucracy. Officials of the Government, they are also members of the Nation. The prestige of the people is of greater importance to them than that of themselves or the State. They are servants of the people, not their masters. A bureaucrat is a master, a ruler, a Hakim. An official is an Ahalkar, or an Amaldar. As soon as India becomes self-governed, though not fully democratic, the Indian official, however high may be his rank, will know his position. He will be a member of the Nation first and a servant of the State next. An Indian official, however, who is a member of the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy, occupies an entirely different, and a very superior position, superior from the point of view of his prestige against and power over the people. No amount of Indian public opinion affects his conduct.

He is at times even more arrogant and haughty than his British compeer. He is afraid of losing caste with the latter and of falling in his estimation and regard. He is also afraid of his promotion and prospects being affected by the least suspicion of partiality for his country and its people on the part of his British superiors. He can never free his mind from the fear of confidential and secret reports and consultations among the latter. To him the approval of his brother Anglo-Indian bureaucrat, even though of inferior or equal status, often matters more than the disapproval of the whole Indian Nation. His position is extremely unnatural and unfortunate.

It follows, therefore, that the Indianization of the Services will not make much difference to the nation as long as their enrolment and control and their promotion and preferment is vested in British hands. What the Nation wants is the power to appoint and dismiss its servants and not merely a change in the personnel of the Services. For a long time to come we may continue to employ British experts in the various departments of our Government. We have (at least, we ought to have) no prejudice against the British as such. What we object to is his mastery over us. As a friend, as a comrade, as an ally, even as guide and adviser we may value his co-operation, but we donot want his *hakumat.* We shall no longer be his subjects. This in short is my position as regards the bureaucracy.

As regards the other point, viz., our having Legislatures dominated by the *'bourgeoisie'* (the middle classes) I am afraid we cannot defer "self-government" to the day when a fullfledged and a perfect democracy may be possible, though we want a full recognition of the right of all classes and sections of the nation (including the ryot, the small proprietor, the labourer, and the untouchables) to form the Government of the country and to a place therein. In their present condition of mental and moral growth their economic dependence on the wealthy and the middle classes, a Legislature mainly composed of the latter is inevitable. In India, we cannot, by one leap, do better than what nations having universal suffrage are doing in Europe and America.

That does not imply that we can ignore the existence and interests of this class and ride rough-shod over their sentiments and needs. Once we are free agents in our house, we can not only devise means and methods to prevent that class hatred and class war that disfigures Europe today but also to protect the interests of the transitional period. Besides having champions of their cause and advocates of their interests from among the bourgeoisie leaders, they must be represented by men of their own class both in the legislatures and in the Local and Municipal bodies. No one is good enough for ruling others and for looking after their interest. The labourer and the ryot must not feel that he owes the protection and the looking after of his interests in the governing bodies of the country to the kindness and benevolence of his masters or employers. Provision will have to be made immediately for the direct representation of this class through its own members in the governing bodies

of this country. They will have to be educated by willing friends to participate in the Government of the country.

Just now we have two masters, viz. the foreign capitalist and the Indian capitalist. Surely it will be an improvement to get rid of the former and then educate our people to settle with the latter. We shall have to wait for long if we aim at displacing both simultaneously. By that time we may be thoroughly demoralized and lose even the little self-respect and power of initiative and independent action we still possess.

14. THE IMMEDIATE WORK BEFORE US

THE IMMEDIATE WORK before us is one of propaganda and construction, education and organization. We carried on an extensive and intensive propaganda in 1921, and also did a great deal of construction and organizing, but both were to a certain extent subordinated to the idea of 'Swaraj in one year'. All work was dominated by that one idea, and consequently some of it at least was only transient, temporary, improvised for the occasion.

Under the stress of that idea much of the construction and the organization we undertook lacked the elements of permanence and was not characterized by that amount of thought and reasoning which should have been bestowed on it. Most of the thinking was done by one man. Even he moved about the length and breadth of India like a whirlwind. His thinking also partook of the nature of his movements. It was rapid, swift, and dictatorial. It brooked no delays, no doubts, and no discussion. Not that he, the thinker, wanted to be dictatorial and resented either discussion or difference. Nothing of the kind. Mahatma Gandhi allowed the fullest discussion and the fullest difference of opinion ; yet both were ineffective and often futile, as before either entered the field, the thought had been given out, accepted by the masses and partially acted upon. Not only he himself, but the country had profound faith in his wisdom and in the soundness of his judgment and action. Consequently few dared to differ from him, and those who did, were soon convinced that it was breaking against a stonewall to insist on their differences. Yet the loyalty of his lieutentants and co-workers was neither servile nor superficial. It was freely given and fully

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deserved. The one dominating idea was to let him work out his scheme with the largest and fullest support which the country could give him. In carrying out his scheme he neither spared himself nor those who had accepted his leadership. If the scheme failed in its immediate objective, the failure was due neither to any slackness of his nor to any lack of loyalty and support on the part of his co-workers and followers. The wonder is not that it failed only by a hair's breadth, but that it succeeded so largely and so well. It failed because of circumstances over which he had no control, but which he should have foreseen. The matter has been discussed at some length somewhere else, and need not detain us here. The point that I wanted to make was that in the whirlwind of 'Swaraj in one year', we could not devote much thought to our constructive work, and our organization consequently lacked the elements of a well-thought out and well-reasoned scheme.

It was, therefore, an act of wisdom on the Mahatmaji's part to drop, at least for a time, Civil Disobedience from the Congress programme after the Bardoli project of mass Civil Disobedience had been given up on account of the tragedy of Chauri Chaura.[1] The decision about Bardoli and the Bardoli resolutions which were the outcome of it, however, burst upon a confiding, expectant and hopeful country like a bombshell. The shock was too sudden, cataclysmatic and unexpected. It bewildered and to a certain extent surprized and angered the people. About 20 thousand of the rank and file were in jails, about ten millions of money had been collected in the course of twelve months. The Provinces had been depleted of most of their prominent workers. The people had kept their heads cool under the greatest provocation given by the Government and its agents. Thousands had suffered cruelties at the hands of the police and in jails, without any retaliation. All in the expectation of the Millennium at Bardoli. All of a sudden came the collapse. Disappointment, resentment and anger was bound to react.

So it was in this mood that the All-India Congress Committee met at Delhi[2] to consider the Bardoli resolution. The Delhi resolutions embodying a very slight change in the decisions arrived at Bardoli is the greatest testimony to the influence of Mahatma Gandhi over his countrymen. In the case of any other leader, he would have been ruthlessly overthrown and his influence completely

shattered. The way in which people listened to him and still deferred to his judgment was, in my opinion, his greatest triumph. The Government and the Moderates thought otherwise. In the mild revolt at Delhi, they saw the beginning of his fall and in the hope of completing it, they prosecuted and imprisoned him.[3] The picture of Mahatma Gandhi in the dock, pleading guilty to charges of sedition and calmly and coolly demanding the highest punishment sanctioned by the law, brought out the completest revulsion of feeling in his favour. His triumph at Delhi because such it was, considering the atmosphere in which the Delhi resolution was adopted, was fulfilled by his trial and punishment. People forgot their resentment and anger at the failure of Bardoli, and the thing that touched the deepest chords of their hearts was the picture of the leader "in distress". True he was not distressed. But the country was

The decisions at Gaya[4] are the evidence of it, if any was needed. The country is still under the spell of the great trial at Ahmedabad, and not in a mood to tolerate any change in the programme which might, even in the smallest degree, betray a judgment and wisdom. But in their anxiety to stick to the letter of the old programme, they have in a way set aside the wise decisions arrived at Bardoli. The desire to inaugurate Civil Disobedience and to prepare the country for it in the course of four months, by a collection of twenty-five lakhs of rupees and the enrolment of fifty thousand volunteers, is distinctly opposed to the spirit of the Bardoli resolution. The excitement of prosecutions and imprisonments, the agitation over the trials and sufferings of the political prisoners, combined with other causes (such as the differences between Hindus and Muslims, the Guru-ka-Bagh affair, the situation in the Near East etc., and the lack of leadership) have prevented the country from following the constructive programme laid down at Bardoli. The controversy about entry into Councils has been carried on in a narrow and partisan spirit. Both sides have used or misused the idea of Civil Disobedience for party purposes.

Civil Disobedience, which had been postponed *sine die*, has again been set up on the altar by both sides. The ghost has again been re-called to life, without the least chance of a greater vitality being put into it than was found possible under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. The mistake of fixing a short time for preparation has been repeated. The spectre of Civil Disobdience is again

stalking the land without the least chance of its finding a definite body and shape in the near future. The idea has been revived in order to create enthusiasm, the lack of which has been held responsible for the failure of the constructive programme. The motive underlying it is not pure. It has the appearance of an electioneering cry. The Council question should have been approached and decided on its own merits. It has nothing (at least not much) to do with Civil Disobedience. The result is that the leaders and the workers are again excited over it; and there is no inclination to think of the ways and means of carrying out the constructive programme which is the most vital thing to do.

I have, elsewhere, expressed my views on the Council controversy, and I still hold to them. I do not desire to reproduce them here. But what seems most vital and necessary to me is that the best intellect and the best mind of the Congress movement should be devoted to the task of organizing and educating the country. The leaders should have time and opportunity to think, and to think logically, closely and deeply. They ought to study the question, in the spirit of seekers after the truth and the aspirants for light. They should hold constant consultations and give and take each other's thoughts. The crude thinking and acting of 1921 should be replaced by deep thinking and wise planning. The experience of 1920 to 1922 should be utilized in arriving at decisions. The work of collecting funds and enlisting volunteers is good in its own way, but much success is not likely to attend it unless well thought out schemes of organizing the country in the light of the experiences gained in 1921-22, for the purposes and aims of the Congress, have been evolved, first by individual thinking and then by joint deliberations of those possessed of the necessary mental and moral qualifications. The habit of thinking and acting in stress of excitement and exertion requires to be replaced, at least at intervals, by co-ordinated, collated and constructive thinking in a calm and cool atmosphere. We are in the most critical period of our national life. Much will depend on how we think and plan now. No one can see far ahead. But we should put forth in our thought as much of vision (clear, noble and inspiring) as we can command to our service. The leaders have a great responsibility to discharge. Their lead must be clear, well thought out and definite. The lead in thought must be followed by lead in action. There should be

no attempt at all to play to the gallery. There should be no half-heartedness and no hesitations about our resolves. The country should be distinctly told what to do. If it is prepared to listen and do it, well and good, if not, our business does not end here, but it just begins. We should hammer on. The work of educating the country into our ideas and plans must be carried on by active propaganda. The press, the platform and even the pulpit should be used for it. Both tongue and pen ought to be requisitioned: Clubs, associations and schools should be started and utilized for propaganda work.

All legitimate ways allowed by the existing political constitution should be followed. The constitution is not of our making. We do not owe any allegiance to it. But that is no reason why we should not use the opportunity it gives us without making us parties to it, and without in any way shocking or infringing our sense of morality. The only two limitations laid down in our creed are that they should be legitimate and peaceful. Subject to that all ways are open to us. Let different groups adopt different methods so long as fundamentally their thoughts and their principles are morally true and politically sound. Uniformity of practice is not at all vital. Driven by common springs, guided by common motives, controlled by common impulses, inspired by common purposes, we can evolve a common will by working on different lines and without wasting much time and energy in useless controversies carried on in a spirit of partisanship. A certain amount of controversy is necessary and vital, specially when it concerns the fundamentals ; but when the difference is only due to looking at a thing from different angles, without any difference in objects and in methods, it should not be allowed to stand in the way of combined action.

I have no doubt in my mind that Civil Disobedience should, for the present, be shelved. Of course, it will remain a part of our programme. It is based on truth, and on a sense of duty. It is fundamentally right. But the time and occasion of it has for the present gone. We must wait for another favourable opportunity to launch it if it is at all needed. In the meantime, we must organise and educate in a constructive spirit and in an atmosphere of sustained work. The experiences gained and the spirit engendered should both be invoked to help us in the task. I am perfectly

certain that if we undertake the work in the same spirit of devotion, of single mindedness, of sacrifice, and selflessness as marked our conduct in 1921, the response by the country will even be greater, nobler, more inspiring and more durable. Let us make a note of the advance we have made and use it for further progress, in the true spirit of 'pioneers and miners'. Let us take our inspiration from the Gita, and act, act in the living present, with a will to achieve and succeed. God willing we will succeed.

15. POLITICAL SITUATION IN INDIA AND THE CONGRESS ORGANISATION

IT WAS MY desire that this Conference should be held in January. I had two reasons for this wish. One personal and the other public. From the personal point of view, I felt that I was unequal to the task you imposed on me by electing me the President of this Conference. The disease to which I fell a victim within the period of my imprisonment in the Lahore Central Jail, has not left me completely. My lungs are not yet clear and I have to proceed and live with extreme caution. The duties, which devolve upon the President of such a Conference, are onerous and exacting. From the very first I was very reluctant to accept the offer of the Reception Committee. But after having yielded to the pressure of friends, I considered the matter and begged to be relieved. The Working Committee of the Punjab Provincial Congress acceded to my request and elected Dr. Kitchlew[1] in my place, but to my misfortune Dr. Kitchlew declined the post, so the duty again fell on me. At this stage I put forward the other plea which to my mind was even more important than the personal. I thought it would be better on the whole to be in possession of the decisions of the Cocanada Congress,[2] before definitely laying down our plans for the next year. You in your wisdom, however, decided otherwise ; I have bowed to your decision and have come here, but before proceeding further, I must give you a warning. I am going to be more businesslike than ever, and will be inclined to be rather strict in the conduct of the proceedings. You must be indulgent with me and co-operate with me in bringing the proceedings to a speedy close. This much by way of apology and warning. Now to come to business, I do not propose

Presidential address delivered by Lala Lajpat Rai at the Punjab Provincial Conference held at Jaranwala in December 1923. Reproduced from the *Tribune* of 9 December 1923.

to deliver a lengthy address, and will simply confine myself to a bare statement of my views on some only of the many burning questions of the day. I do not believe in shirking responsibility, nor in taking shelter behind vague generalities and verbosity. The statement of my views, therefore, will be brief but clear.

Firstly, I want to say in the clearest language possible, that I find no reason to be ashamed of what we did and what we refrained from doing under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi in the year 1921. I withdraw nothing; I explain nothing. I make no apology and express no regrets. I am proud both of our achievements and failures. I am prouder still of the great leader who inspired and guided us; and yet I do not wish to throw away the experience which we have gained at so much cost and so much suffering. It is not the suffering that matters. Suffering is the badge of our tribe, and we shall be guilty of cowardice if we shirk it at the psychological moment and in the cause of truth. But I must frankly admit that I have little faith in suffering for suffering's sake. It may have its uses in the purification of the individual and the development of the race, but for practical purposes of life and for the immediate problems of life, it is a force which need not be counted upon. Like Mahatma Gandhi, I will love to be a visionary, but only a practical visionary. It is this side of my nature which prompts me to take stock of our losses and gains during the last two years. From January 1921 up to the end of November, we did an amount of work which has no parallel in the history of public life in this country. In the short period of eleven months, we carried the message of Liberty and Freedom, National self-respect and Patriotism, and Truth and Simplicity to almost every hamlet in the land. The remotest corners of this country, where no political voice had ever been heard before, resounded with cries of "Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai." This was not a simple cry of childish exultation, but stood for something tangible, definite and substantial. It stood for Truth, Purity and Simplicity. It expressed, as nothing else did, the desire of the people of this country to sink their differences for the purpose of achieving Swarajya, to throw away sectarian petty-mindedness and narrowness in favour of complete national consciousness; to subordinate personal ambitions and aspirations to the great cause of Truth and Justice. We can safely await the judgment of posterity on our achievements in this direction. In the short time of eleven

months, we created a national will, where there was none before, and made the nation take a stand which they had never done. We created an atmosphere in which both foes and friends trembled. Foes trembled, because they did not know where it was leading to ; friends, because they could not believe their senses. We were within "an inch of success". We succeeded ; yet we failed. We succeeded in creating an atmosphere of success. We failed because we had not taken full account of the hosts against us. Our moderate countrymen failed us just at the psychological moment. Our leader failed us because he pitched his ideal of Non-violence too high for practical purposes. Yet it is something to be proud of, to have had such an ideal and such a leader.

Coming nearer home, and taking stock of provincial gains and losses, I have no reason to be ashamed of the record we have made. We were the first in the field to court imprisonment and suffering for the right of freedom of meeting, we lighted the torch and lo, in a month the whole country was ablaze. The first signal went forth from the rooms of the Provincial Congress Committee, Punjab.[3] Then the battle began in right earnest and there was no going back. From that moment onwards the "Havan Kund" was kept burning for full one year. The best of us offered ourselves as *Ahutis*, Hindus, Musalmans and Sikhs, none lagged behind. Men and women, boys and old men, all played their part nobly and gave conclusive proof of their burning desire to win freedom at any cost. Thousands went to jails. Thousands more were mercilessly beaten and dispersed. None flinched. Very few apologised. For full twelve months and more the jails continued to resound with national shouts. The cry was "still they come". All this was borne cheerfully and unflinchingly. I look upon that period as the period of glory. We have written a chapter of Indian history which is bound to live !

If freedom could be won by going to jails in large numbers, we should have won it by this time ; if liberty could be achieved by showing contempt of British courts, British laws and British prisons, we should have been free by now. Never before in the history of British rule in India was British justice put to the test we forced upon it.

This was no mean achievement for a people so hopelessly divided and hopelessly devoid of national self-consciousness as we were before Gandhi came on the stage. But there our glory ended.

Once inside the jails, we forgot ourselves, committed many follies, and were guilty of much pettiness and meanness which comes out of lack of discipline and lack of training for such a high mission. It is a privilege to suffer for a great cause, but it is a greater privilege to suffer nobly and uncomplainingly, preserving at the same time an attitude of humility and selflessness, in the course and period of that suffering. The suffering was there, the sense of pride in that suffering was also present, but the sense of humility and selflessness was rather lacking. We were guilty of many aberrations. We broke every rule, we spoilt the discipline of jail life, we abused the best and the kindest of the officials. In short, we left nothing undone to provoke them into an attitude of hostility. Is it a wonder then that they under this provocation exercised their powers most mercilessly and cruelly, and in their turn tried to reduce us to dust ? Yet we did never flinch. Young and old, all suffered, and suffered terribly, yet more or less cheerfully and unrepentingly. The traces of our sufferings still cling to our faces and are visible in our bodies (in some cases). They are not likely to be effaced even by death. Some are only half alive, having developed permanent debility and permanent derangement of one organ or the other. If, then, we find that in face of all this and in spite of all this, only a few (very few, indeed, as compared with other provinces) among several thousands ever begged for mercy or apologised, this is a record of which, this land of heroes may well be proud of. Personally I never feel any hesitation in apologising when I find myself in the wrong, but apologising without being convinced of one's mistake is a sign of cowardliness. As a rule, Punjabees do not admit their mistakes, nor do they allow themselves to be convinced of their mistakes, easily. So in spite of protestations from friends and foes, they often stood to their guns, prepared to suffer rather than to submit.

So far then, there is nothing to be sorry for or to be ashamed of. But then there is the other side of the picture. We cannot altogether excuse ourselves of responsibility for what happened in our province, during our sojourn in jails It is abundantly clear that most of the forces which we tried to control and did effectively control during our presence in the field. got loosened in our absence and played a havoc with the public life of the province The Hindu-Muslim antagonism which had been effectively checked and controlled in 1921, burst out in greater vigour in 1922 and engulfed those

who remained behind. We were under the impression that we had buried this antagonism for good, by the boycott of Councils and by declining services under the Crown, specially in the Police and Military Departments. We thought that the Non-co-operation movement had set at rest all the communal rivalries which arose from association with Government. To our great dismay, we found soon after we were shut in jails, that we were mistaken ; that the "ghost" was still alive, not only alive, but very much alive. It is not my business here to apportion the blame among different communities, but the fact remains, the significance of which should be fully realised, that in this matter the *Fatwa* of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema, the verdicts of the Congress and the Khilafat did not find many adherents, either among the Mohammedans or the Hindus of the Punjab. The enrolment in the Police and the Army was as brisk as ever if not even brisker. No one can deny that enlistment in the Army and the Police was not substantially affected by our propaganda. That fact alone explains our failure in this, the most important item of our programme, and the consequences that flowed therefrom. We must not fail to remember that in spite of our propaganda to the contrary, Government service continues to be the chief attraction for our educated youngmen, be they Hindus, Mohammedans or Sikhs.

That is the reason why we failed to bring about an effective boycott of Government aided schools or colleges. In the Punjab at least, we must note that a very large number of our peasantry too has not given up their hankering after service in the Military or the Police. Evidently it pays them better than agriculture or industry. It is a question of bread and butter and refuses to be solved either by resolutions or by *Fatwas*, and it is certain that as long as Government service and the profession of law, continues to be the mainstay of our educated youngmen, the antagonism between the Hindus and the Mohammedans which is economic in its basis, will not cease. It is a fight for loaves and fishes. It begins with educated men and then filters downwards by natural processes to the masses. Whatever be the causes, the fact is there and we must take note of it. The most important problem that confronts us and which Non-co-operation has so far failed to solve finally and effectively, is the Hindu-Muslim problem.

The first and the foremost thing for us to do is to find ways

and means to solve the problem. Mere sentimental talk will not solve it, nor will temporary patch-work or symbolical treatment. We must go to the root of the disease, diagnose the latter in all its bearings, find out the remedy and then apply it with courage and conviction. To my mind there are two ways of solving it. The first is that of Mahatma Gandhi. He exhorted the Hindus to show complete trust in the Mohammedans and adopt an attitude of complete surrender. The Hindus have declined to accept this, and the matter ends there. The second is to come to a definite and abiding understanding about the positions which the communities have to occupy in the furture Government of the country, and then to localise the remaining causes of the trouble. The Special Congress at Delhi appointed a small Sub-committee to draw up a Pact which might settle for ever the principles on which the representations of the different religious communities composing the Indian Nation in the future government of the country is to be based. I cannot anticipate the report of this Sub-committee or what is likely to be its fate in the Congress. A mere understanding between the Congress leaders will not do. In arriving at it the Congress leaders must consult all the Hindu and Mohammedan leaders outside, who have influence in their respective communities. Dr. Ansari and myself have, with the help and advice of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, made the first draft.[5]

In the making of this draft, I found that if both the communities were inspired by the same broadmindedness and the desire to settle all differences on a high plane of Indian Nationalism as characterised our deliberations at Solan, our troubles should soon end. The difficulty however is that the Pact is not being made for or in the interests of high class men. The man in the street must be made to feel that the understanding has been inspired by a spirit of fairness and justice. Neither of the two communities should have reason to complain that their vital interests have been sacrificed for the sake of a patched up unity. The draft will be soon printed and circulated. I can only hope that the leaders of the two communities and all others likely to be affected by it, will not only consider it from a national point of view, but also look at it from an international angle. We are building up a Nation which has to take its place among the other nations of the world and unless we subordinate non-vital

communal differences to the needs of such nation building, we cannot succeed in our work. I am hoping, therefore, that the Pact drafted by us will be found to be a reasonable solution of most of the questions on which the two communities differ. I am not at liberty to disclose it to you without the permission of my colleague on the Sub-committee. I can, however, say this much, that it is based on the conception of the broadest possible religious liberty to all concerned.

The first article of our future constitution of India must provide absolute religious liberty to all religious denominations, subject only to such restrictions as are inevitable for the general maintenance of law and order. To this must be added the absolute religious neutrality of the future State. In this latter respect we have gone even further than the present Government. According to our ideas, the future Swarajya Government should not be at liberty to use public funds for any religious or denominational purpose whatsoever, in a land of many religions and many cults. This, to my view, is the best safeguard against religious or denominational partisanship. With this provision the risks of the majority rule are very much lessened.

Barring the important question of representation in the government, we have divided the other differences into two classes, *i.e.* (a) "All-India" and (b) "Local". In my judgment it is most important to provide a general solution for the former and a suitable machinery for the latter. Whether the particular recommendations made by us are accepted or not by the two communities, these are the broad lines on which alone, a satisfactory solution is possible. I have been speaking of the two communities, but that does not mean that we ignored the others. The right of others are also sufficiently guaranteed by our proposals. So much about the Pact.

I am afraid, however, that in the prevailing atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion, of bitterness and strife, of reprisals and revenge, the proposed Pact has very little chance of fair consideration at the hands of the two communities. After all we cannot build a nation without mutual trust and faith, without the desire to live in peace and harmony, without readiness to forget and forgive each other's faults and without unflinching in the principle that "united we stand and divided we fall". Our immediate task, therefore, is to set about finding ways and means of coming together in an

atmosphere of friendship and mutual trust. Unfortunately our province is the place where communalism has run mad and where the three principal religious communities have left nothing undone to completely isolate one from the other. With communal representation, communal colleges, communal schools, communal clubs, practically no opportunity is left for the different communities to come together. The Congress was the only connecting link between these, where all the communities used to gather, to do thinking and acting on national lines. The denominational institutions may be of great value in spreading education, but the very education imparted within their walls, poisons the springs of national solidarity and emphasises communal differences. Legislative Councils and Local bodies are the places where joint corporate action is possible. But here again, unfortunately the bureaucracy has succeeded very well in keeping the three communities in separate watertight compartments. The very first thing then to do is to create opportunities for bringing the communities together for social and national ends. The Congress is the only organisation which can and ought to undertake this work. I am therefore going to propose definite measures with the above object in view, for the consideration of and adoption by the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee. One of these proposals aims at the appointment of a Provincial Board of Conciliation consisting of about fifty to sixty representative members taken from different parts of the province. All of those members need not be Congressmen. One half of them may be Congressmen, and the other half to be selected by these, may be such as do not belong to the Congress.

Having thus outlined my ideas on Hindu-Muslim question, I proceed to the consideration of other items of our programme. But before I do so, let me dispose of the Legislative Councils and the Assembly.

We have practically finished our work in connection with these bodies. I may now explain to you why I worried myself so much about these elections. My object was to use the elections for Congress propaganda, and also find out how far the prestige and power of the Congress had been undermined. As a result of experience gained during these elections, I can safely say, that a great deal of communal froth displayed by the Hindus and the Mohammedan press and their respective candidates, was generated and kept on only for electioneering purposes. Now that the elections

are over, I am hoping that much of the communal bitterness will settle down and assume its normal proportions. As far as the Hindus of the Punjab are concerned, it is a matter of gratification to me to find that, among them at least, the Congress is still a living force, much more influential than the purely Hindu organizations started or organised to work in competition with it. I am sorry I cannot say the same about the Mohammedans though I am sure that if the Mohammedan Congressmen had taken their stand on the Swarajist ticket, they would have been agreeably surprised to find that the Congress was not a spent up force even among their community as they assumed it to be. The extent of polling in the Mohammedan constituencies has proved almost conclusively that the '*fatwa*' of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema has had or has very little influence over the Mohammedans of the Punjab, if any at all, and the word Congress has still a charm of its own.

The work in the Councils is to be guided by the leaders therein; we ourselves can only give them advice. The Congress as such will not be bound by what they do and so there will be no occasion for the Congress to come into conflict with them. In this connection I have lately noticed a revival of the agitation in the Congress ranks against any change in the Congress programme. Some respected Congress leaders have raised the cry "back to Nagpur". I confess I do not fully understand them. Shriyut Rajagopalachari[6] has explained it in the following words:

"By 'Back to Nagpur' I mean that we should keep the Non-co-operation programme as settled at Nagpur unaltered. The triple boycott should be the policy of the Congress, though parts of the programme may be in abeyance so far as the active propaganda is concerned. My view is that constructive work should be concentrated upon and also that it should be done as part of, and in view of the fulfilment of, the Non-co-operation programme."

Now, with all my respect for Shriyut Rajagopalachari, I cannot, for the life of me understand how we could go back to Nagpur, even if we unanimously wished to do so? The Nagpur programme was conceived and based on the idea of "Swaraj within one year". It was on that basis that Mahatmaji asked lawyers to suspend their practice, and school boys and college boys to leave their schools and colleges for one year. The expression "suspend the practice" was

significant of the mentality that underlay the whole programme. The one year has passed. In fact it had expired before Mahatmaji was imprisoned. Having taken note of that fact, he left Nagpur behind and marched forward to Bardoli, speaking symbolically we might say he left us at Bardoli and there we are still now.

It is thus clear that "Back to Nagpur" is an impossible cry. We have left Nagpur miles behind and cannot retrace our steps to that unlucky place. We cannot revive the slogan of "Swaraj within one year". That slogan is dead. Many lawyers who suspended their practice for one year have gone back to the law courts and in doing so they have in no way broken their word.

Coming to triple boycott, we observe that two of them were put in abeyance, if not altogether abandoned at Bezwada.[7] The third was knocked on the head at Delhi. Most of the students who left schools and colleges for one year, have also resumed their studies and in doing so have in no way done a dishonourable act. There are some who will not go back either to their profession or to their schools and colleges. Seth Jamnalal can help them no more, nor can Congress funds, for the simple reason that there are no funds. Some of them have pledged themselves to a life of poverty and patriotism. All honour to them. The country is richer by their sacrifice. Inspired, guided and encouraged by them, more will follow their noble example, and we shall be able to have a devoted band of whole-time workers pledged to a life-long service of the country.

But in the meantime we are in honour bound to look after those also who will neither go back to professions, nor to schools and colleges, and for whom the Congress can find no remunerative work. You will thus see, my friends, that the talk of going back to Nagpur is rather out of place. The Nagpur programme was no doubt a good programme. It was based on true principles. These are as true today as they were in 1920, but since then much water has flown under the bridges and we have found them true as these principles are and shall remain so for ever, we have not the power or the means to enforce them in practical way. It was this consciousness that induced Mahatmaji to practically suspend two of the three boycotts as early as Bezwada. The third was already dead as the Council questions were over, and there was no question of entering them. The question was discussed when Mahatmaji was no longer free to guide us. It ranged in full fury for one year and was finally put at rest at Delhi.[8] The

three boycotts are thus dead, and any attempt to revive them would be futile. Perhaps I am right in saying that they are dead. They are only "in abeyance". As ideals these may be there, but as practical problems of the day they exist no more. Mahatmaji reconstructed the two of them at Bardoli in a different shape and body; about the third killed at Delhi, we need bother no more, at least for three years. If my friend Shriyut Rajagopalachari means that the Congress, as such, should have nothing to do with the policy to be followed in the Councils by Swarajists, I may agree with him. But let us have no delusion on this point as well. Let us not pretend to be altogether indifferent as to what happens in the Council Chambers. The Councils wield a great power, at least for mischief, and we cannot, even if we wish, adopt an attitude of complete indifference towards them. We cannot but watch with interest the activities of our compatriots in the Assembly and in the different Council Chambers. I for one would not even refuse to give them such help as I can give from the outside by way of advice. But beyond this we, as Congress, may dismiss the Councils altogether from the Congress programme, at least for the next three years. No one however can prevent us from reading the proceedings and applauding those who fight our battles there. The question then is not of going back to Nagpur, but of taking a firm hold at Bardoli, the stage where Mahatmaji left the Non-co-operation coach. We have so far neglected it in our zeal for Nagpur and have allowed it to rust there in sand and in water. Some have thrown dust over it, others have disfigured and discoloured it by the heat of controversy. Let us now go to Bardoli in respect and reverence, recover our neglected coach, put it in order and then drive it with all the force which faith in righteousness of our cause and reverence for our leader can put in our arms. Yes, I am all for Bardoli, and I will tell you why.

The campaign of "Swaraj in one year" did not give us time and opportunity to put the Congress organization in perfect order. We collected money, enlisted members and volunteers and travelled like whirlwind. All that was splendid, but now that Swaraj within one year has not come, we have to rebuild the whole structure anew. The skeleton is there, but it requires filling up. We must dig the foundations deep, put in concrete and then build solidly; otherwise our structure may be the victim of every strong wind. For this we

require money and men. The Congress must be so built as to be above communal strifes and sectarian rivalries. To tell the truth, the latter will always remain with us. It is our business to so construct the Congress as to place it above them. The Congress represents the country and the truth, and the country and the truth are above denominational jealousies. The Congress represents the united wisdom, the unified interests and the corporate lives of all the communities, and as such, it must be above all separatist tendencies. Unhappily it is not so at present. "Why it is not so ?" is the question of questions, for a reply to which we must search our hearts and give a faithful and true explanation. It may be that we ourselves, the leaders and the workers, are lacking in the true spirit of nationalism, without which it is impossible to build a nation. It may be that we are too prone to take the wish for the deed. It is only when we take an inside view of our weaknesses that we begin to realise the importance of the leadership of such a personality as that of Mahatma Gandhi. Let us then try to realise the full significance of what is involved in true "Nationalism" and then set in work. The Congress Committees must be organised anew. Each village should have its own leaders. There may be several classes of leaders everywhere, the lower in grade taking the place of the one higher, the moment the latter is removed from the field of the activity. Youngmen should be carefully trained not only to habits of simplicity, purity and truthfulness, but to broadmindedness, generosity, forbearance and tolerance in their dealings with their fellowmen. The next time the movement assumes an aggressive form, which sooner or later it must, it should have no fear of collapse on the imprisonment of the top-most leaders. The next time we fill the jails, we should be able to give a better account of ourselves than we did on the last occasion. The idea of an All India Rashtra Sewak Mandal is a good one, but I am afraid it is premature. We must first build up the District and the Provincial Mandals before we can put it on All India basis. We should have national schools, national colleges and Ashrams to train our men. There is no use in starting too many institutions at once, then see them closing one by one and again founding new ones on the debris of those that have collapsed because of our lack of foresight and forethought in building them up. I would therefore ask the Punjab Congressmen to concentrate their attention :

(a) on bringing about a workable understanding between the Hindus and the Muslims,

(b) on rebuilding the Congress Committees in villages, towns and cities,

(c) on putting the Lahore 'Vidya Pith'[9] on a sound financial basis,

(d) on organizing the civic guards or the volunteer corps on sound basis,

(e) on pushing forward the use of *khaddar*, and

(f) on removing untouchability.

On lowest calculations, we shall require a fund of at least three lakhs for the next year's operations ; one lakh for the 'Vidya Pith', fifty thousand for the civic guards and one lakh for general propaganda and organisation work, and fifty thousand for miscellaneous requirements.

I have already condemned the action of the Government in declaring the Akali Dal and the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee as unlawful assemblies.[10] The situation created by this action of the Government is full of anomalies and charged with electricity. The Government is not arresting all who declare themselves to be members of the Akali Dal or the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee. It seems that they intend only to capture the leaders and thus to crush the movement by capturing its brain. We do not wish to discuss the merits. For the present we confine our attention to the action of the Government in declaring the whole Akali Dal and the S. G. P. C. as unlawful. Any way I have already expressed my opinion on the situation and need say nothing more. This Conference will have to consider the resolutions passed by the informal meeting of the leaders at Amritsar on the 13th of November and since then endorsed by the Working Committee of the All India Congress Committee. I need only add that we are duty bound to place the best in us at the disposal of the Sikh community in their struggle with the Government.

I am of opinion that the platform of the Congress is not the proper place to discuss both the Shuddhi and Sangathan movements or similar movements started by or maintained by other religious denominations. Personally, I have a strong dislike for conversions

from one religion to another whether they are effected by Mohammedans, Christians or Hindus, but as long as conversion is a part of religious liberties which we are bound to guarantee to all religious denominations alike we can make no exception either in favour of or against any particular denomination.

It seems that both these movements have come to stay, and all that the Congress can do and should do is to beg of all communities to keep the religious movements within limit and to avoid unnecessary bitterness, strife and provocations in their religious work.

As for the Sangathan movement, I wish all Sangathans and Anjumans and Communities merged themselves into the National Congress movement. We should have only one national organisation, one flag and one platform in order to be able to free ourselves not only from foreign yoke, but also from disintegrating forces at home.

I am not going to say anything about Hindu-Muslim riots in general in this address, except that I am convinced that at Saharanpur the Muslims were aggressive and they inflicted immense losses and great humiliations on the Hindus of that place.[11]

Before I finish, I wish to strike a note of warning. Some of our friends in Southern and Western India do not seem to sufficiently realise the seriousness of the situation created by the Hindu-Muslim problem in Northern India. They seem to be disposed to treat lightly and do not seem to be prepared to attach that importance to it which it deserves. I can only tell them that if they continue in their present attitude of indifference, they will be doing so at their peril. If the Hindu-Mohammedan quarrel is not checked, it might engulf the whole country, and might wreck the national movement beyond any possibilities of redemption. I must also protest against another tendency quite visible among certain leaders of insisting that we should love our enemies while we may hate our friends. This is intolerable and makes clear thinking and joint action impossible. We must not add to the numerous cults and sects of this country, by adding one more under the name of Mahatma Gandhi. Nothing was further from the thoughts of Mahatmaji himself. We had to accept his principles and to act up to them because they are good, not because they were promulgated by Mahatma Gandhi. Of course, these principles are also dear to us.

Mahatmaji believed in them, but for that reason we cannot allow a new sect or a new cult to be promulgated. I strongly deprecate the use of the words. "Gandhi-ism" or "Gandhian", at least by the friends of Mahatma Gandhi. By doing so, they play into the hands of his enemies and those of his country.

16. THE INDIAN PROBLEM

1. THE GREATNESS OF THE PROBLEM

THE INDIAN problem is a very vast and complicated problem—vaster, bigger and more complicated than any known to history. Its highness, vastness and complexity is not the product of its size only, but is also due to the variety and diversity of interests involved. In population, India is equal to the whole of Europe minus Russia. In area, it is about two-third of the United States of America. In population, it is the second best populated country in the world. In area, it is about fourth or fifth. Its history goes back to prehistoric times, its culture is so ancient as to baffle the researches of the best of antiquarians. No one can fix its beginning, no one can trace its growth with anything like certainty and confidence. Among its population, it claims the representatives of all the races and religions of the world. Its people speak many languages and follow many creeds. They belong to different degrees of civilisation. Yet no one can deny that it has a geographical, a cultural, and a historical unity of its own which distinguishes it sufficiently and markedly from the other countries and nations of the world. Its national and political unity, however, is denied by some, and affirmed by others.

Among the former we count the British Imperialists and their foreign admirers; among the latter the Indian Nationalists and their foreign sympathisers. Motives apart, there is truth in both the statements. The question is relatively new. It has come into more

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or less prominence within the last fifty or at the most hundred years. Before that no one even thought of it. All history, ancient or modern, speaks of India 'as India', never of its parts. All references in foreign literature indicate this unity. The 'Nation' idea itself is comparatively a new idea. It is a product and growth of the 19th century. Before that it may have been nebulous or latent, but no one ever attached any importance to it. In India it has come into prominence on account of the claims set up for its freedom or independence of British control, by Indians, or their friends in the British Isles or elsewhere. It has thus become an issue between the Imperialists and the Nationalists. The former are interested in exaggerating the diversity of races, languages, religions and cultures which characterizes it, and the latter in minimising the same. What matters is the motive behind ; and the point of view from which the question is looked at. The tests of nationhood or nationality relied on by the early 19th century sociologists, have all, one by one, been dropped by modern (20th century) thinkers, for the simple but most cogent reason that they do not fit in with the facts of life. Judged by those old standards and tests, there are a few nations on the face of the globe which can be passed as such, yet no one in his senses will deny the title to peoples and nations who claim it in spite of the lack of those tests, and whom the whole world concedes that title for all practical purposes. The subject is admirably discussed in Mr. Zangwill's short but brilliant essay on nationality published by Messrs. Macmillan & Co., New York. I have no intention of examining the question here. I will assume that this diversity notwithstanding, there is sufficient unity in India to entitle us to call ourselves a nation and claim the privileges of nationhood. But even granting that we are not a nation yet, it is sufficient for our purpose that all the peoples inhabiting India have a genuine desire to become a nation, and aim at the full status and privileges of nationhood. Of this desire and this aim there can be no doubt. All the different religious communities of India--Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis, Jains, Buddhists, all parties of the Indian politicians, Moderates, Extremists, Non-co-operators and Revolutionaries, all classes of the Indian people, lords and tenants, capitalists and workmen, Brahmans and Non-Brahmans, are agreed on the desirability and necessity of building themselves into a united nation and achieving Swarajya. They may differ, and do differ, as to methods, as

to the pace of progress in that direction, as to the means of achiveing that end, but there is no difference as to the aim and object. Even the Anglo-Indians agree with the Nationalists on this point. National unity is one of the basic objects of the Indian National Congress. Both the Moderates and the Non-co-operators are pledged to it, though the former did precious little to achieve it. The Non-co-operators have laid great emphasis on this part of their programme, and however much our enemies may ridicule the statement that Hindu-Muslim unity has been achieved, there is no doubt that considerable success has attended our efforts in that line within the last two years. Recently much has happened to strengthen the statement of our enemies but I am still hopeful. The Hindu-Muslim problem is a creation of the British Raj. In the Hindu period of India's long and eventful history, there were no Muslims in this country, and consequently there could be no such problem. In the Muslim period, too, the problem did not exist. The fact of the ruling dynasty being Muslim, did give an advantage to the Muslims over the Hindus, a circumstance in which the latter had to acquiesce. The bane of Muslim rule in India was not so much the tyranny over Hindus, as the existence of a State of never ceasing war ; yet there were periods of Muslim rule in which the country was prosperous and flourishing. There were few reigns only in which the Hindus were discriminated against or persecuted as such.

With English rule in India, came the Hindu-Muslim problem. Now it is extending. The problem of India is no more a Hindu-Muslim problem. It is becoming a Hindu-Muslim-Christian-Sikh-Parsi-Buddhist-Jain problem. Never before was communal consciousness so keen, so assertive, nay so aggressive as within the last fifty years of British rule. The reasons are obvious. British rule has created, fostered and nourished it. The genius of European civilization has encouraged it. Education in European ideals and standard first gave birth to that intense individualism which 'teaches everyone for himself'. Unsatisfied individual ambition, plus patriotic bias, plus religious nationalism, plus economic needs did the rest. Communal rivalry between Hindus and the Muslims for Government favours was first brought into existence by Lord Dufferin and Sir Auckland Colvin.[1] The little spark which was then kindled as an effective counter-move against the Indian National Congress, and as an antidote against growing Indian nationhood has since then

been fed by different agencies, in different ways and with different motives. It has now grown into a flame which is less of a danger to Indian nationhood than to British domination of Asia. The British have a reputation of being unimaginative, and are rather proud of their Imperialistic instincts. Crooked Imperialism, however, always lands its votaries into awkward positions. The present loyalty of the class conscious Muslim has now taken a different turn. From a check to the Indian nationalist, from a hindrance in the way of Indian nationhood, from a clog in the wheels of the Indian National Congress, it has developed into an ally of the former and an asset of very high value for the latter. The British have just Knighted a Muslim poet than whom no one has done more to fire the ambition of the class conscious Muslims to regain their lost political dominance in Asia.[2] Similar is the result of British policy towards the Sikhs. The Akali movement is a natural child of Imperial crookedness. This is however by the way. The important fact to be noted is that in spite of the communal consciousness being just now at its Nth. point, the desire for National Unity and for political freedom has grown with it *pari passu* and within the last five years has burst out into a dazing fire threatening discomfiture and destruction to all those who stand in the way of its progress. It is remarkable that while the communal consciousness of the different religious communities forming the Indian nation is being fed and fostered by all methods open to human ingeniousness, nothing avails against the growth of an idea of common nationhood. The rapidity with which the latter is gaining strength, both extensively and intensively, is highly marvellous. Several circumstances have combined to bring about this result, not the least noticeable of which is the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. But the Moderates have been making all efforts to get Under-Secretaryships, Governorships, Executive Councillorships, Ministerships ; the Non-co-operators under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi have been busy in fostering and spreading the idea of nationhood. Thousands of tongues and thousands of pen have delivered the message of unity, national solidarity and national independence—political, economic and cultural—at every home and hearth in the length and breadth of this ancient land. I firmly believe that there is hardly a cottage in India (unless it be in parts inhabited by the aborigines) where name and fame of Mahatma Gandhi has not reached and where his message has not been delivered. I have

received many evidences of this. It is therefore no exaggeration to say that whatever may be said of the failure of the Non-co-operation movement to achieve Swarajya within one year, its success in fostering and spreading the idea of nationhood, in creating an intense desire for national freedom, and in creating a collective will to achieve this by our own effort has been amply monumental. The first phase of the movement was over with the Bardoli resolutions and the subsequent imprisonment of Mahatmaji[3]. Now that we have gone through the first fire, and to my mind, successfully, without injuring much of our body and soul, it behoves us to examine the situation camly and dispassionately, take stock of our losses and gains, and chalk out programme for future work with intelligence born of experience and reflection, with determination born of conviction (of the righteousness of our cause) and of the recollection of sufferings suffered for it.

II. THE DIRECT AIM IN VIEW

It is necessary that we should be clear in our thought, because clarity and consistency of action is impossible without clarity of thought. What is our aim and what is our goal? Nationhood and Swarajya? Yes. But what do we mean by either or both? A patched up unity and a patched up Swarajya or a real biological unity incorporating all of us into one single whole with a determination to be and remain a whole for all time to come and under all circumstances. Our critics say that our present unity is a mere lip-unity, or at best a mechanical one with the sole object of turning out the British, so that after the British have cleared out, we may be free to fight out our battles on our right to supremacy in this land of many religions and many languages.

Do we want a collection of mutually warring, struggling, competing religious communities with chances of victory or domination for whosoever turns out to be the strongest, the most efficient and the most powerful? Shall these streams flow each in its own bed, alongside of each other without the one mixing its waters with the other and without all of us becoming one complete whole, to unite against a common enemy whenever there is one to fight out, but otherwhise to remain separate, everyone of us trying to devour and absorb the other whenever there is an opportunity for the same? Is that our conception of Unity?

Or, are we arriving at a complete obliteration of all religious differences ?

Is that possible ? Is that desirable ? Shall we not be poorer for it ? Do not these different points of view constitute our inheritance ? Are they not our wealth ? Do they not distinguish us from the rest of this world ? Is it for nothing that the world thinks that of all the peoples of the world Indians alone are truly religious ? Is it for nothing that we have earned the distinction of being a nation of philosophers, in which every man, woman and child cares more for the ultimate and the permanent than for the temporary and the transient ? Is it for nothing that the world gives us credit for simple living and high thinking ? Are we ashamed of the fact that ours is a country of many faiths and many cultures ? Is it impossible for us to win national freedom and be great in the comity of nations, without losing this distinction? If so, let us once for all come to the conclusion that our task is an impossible one ; because I can think of no time and no contingency when this country will cease to be a land of many faiths, many beliefs and many creeds. What possibility there is of this country ever abolishing its religious differences or being the home of a people following only one religion. At present there is no religion, no faith, no philosophy, no form of worship, which is not represented here, and which does not claim votaries, followers and adherents among its vast population. Is there a single district, not to speak of provinces, which is religiously homogeneous ? Is it religious homogeneity which we are aiming at ? I hope not. I believe, not, I, for one, not only believe that the task is impossible, but also consider it to be undesirable. Such an aim will be unworthy of our past and one that might also bring into question our sanity.

What then is our conception of nationhood ? What do we mean by Hindu-Muslim unity ? The expression Hindu-Muslim unity is only symbolic. It is not exclusive, but inclusive. When we speak of Hindu-Muslim unity, we do not exclude the other religious communities like the Sikhs, the Christians, the Parsis, the Buddhists, the Jains from our conception of unity or from our idea of nationhood. The Indian nation, such as it is or such as we intend to build neither is nor will be exclusively Hindu, Muslim, Sikh or Christian. It will be each and all. That is my ideal of

Swarajya. That is my goal of nationhood. But it does not mean that until we attain this goal, we must remain a subject nation. There may be some Indians who think that it is an impossible goal. I am not one of them, yet it cannot be denied that it is a very difficult problem. Let us not set to work at it light-heartedly, in a nonchalant way, without deep searchings of heart and without that robustness and virility of faith which alone can make impossible, possible. Mere optimism won't do. Besides optimism, we require a thorough understanding of the problem, in all its bearings and implications, full appreciation of the difficulties and obstacles in the way, without any inclination either to underestimate or to exaggerate them, a clear grasp of the process or processes by which we are likely to achieve it, and a vivid idea of the risks involved and the disappointments that are likely to face us, before we reach the final goal. But that is not the only point on which we need clear thinking. Unity may be an end by itself in as much as it is absolutely necessary for national freedom, but after all it is a means to a greater and more comprehensive end which is freedom, liberty, independence or Swarajya. What is our conception of freedom? What kind of independence are we seeking? What do we mean by Swarajya, what is our ideal and how do we propose to achieve it? By war, rebellion, revolution, non-co-operation or agitation? Do we want to get out of the British Empire or stay in it? Must we break with the British? Or is it possible to achieve our end without breaking with them? Are the British enemies or friends? What are the weapons with which we propose to fight? Is our campaign one of hatred or love or neither or of both? Can we reach the goal or attain the ideal, by one jump, or must we proceed by stages? If the latter, what kind of stages shall we be content with? These are some of the questions which thrust themselves into the mentality of every thinking Indian, making his days anxious and his nights sleepless. Some of them need not be answered at once. But there are others which brook no delay and are insistently clamouring for an immediate reply. Because on their right answer depends our programme of work. The desire for Swarajya has become universal. It embraces all classes and all sections of the Indian population. People are prepared to make great sacrifices and even suffer for it, if need be. But they are not clear as to its meaning and implications. We have apotheosized the spirit of the nation for

Swarajya without making it clear what it is likely to bring to them, say some critics. These friends maintain that our ideas of Swarajya are so hazy, vague and nebulous that we dare not put a scheme before the public for fear of rousing sleeping dogs and creating differences. The charge is partly true and partly false.

III. THE NEED FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT

We are not in a position to prepare a complete scheme of Swarajya now because the dream is only relative and not absolute. What kind of Swarajya will suit us at a particular time depends on the time and manner of attaining it, on our capacity and ability to put our ideas into practice; on the mental and moral development of the Nation ; and *no less* on the world situation. The Swarajya of 1930 must from the nature of things be different from the Swarajya of 1923. It will be foolish for us to put forth an authoritative scheme before the time and the nation are ripe for it. The reforms which the Congress demanded in 1916.[4] proved to be entirely inadequate in 1918. Instead of furthering the cause of Swarajya, they actually hampered it. There will be plenty of time to make a scheme after we have secured the right to make one. As soon as the right is conceded, we shall set ourselves to make a scheme, such as we think can be enforced at once or in the near future. In the meantime what we can and ought to do is to declare our principles and start educating people in them. At present, it seems that there are very few people in the country who have studied the science of social and political psychology or who are acquainted with the advanced political thought of the world. There are fewer still, perhaps, who have devoted much thought as to our national psychology and how we can or ought to change it with a view to put our principles into practice. The Moderate party which guided and controlled the Indian National Congress before 1919, is practically pledged to representative institutions of the kind that are prevailing in Great Britain. They believe in 'majority rule'. One of the greatest disadvantages of the position of political dependence such as we are in, is that, willy-nilly, we have to accept institutions which our rulers thrust on us. We are thus, sometimes, forced to put on the discarded clothes of the world. We can see this most vividly in the department of Education. We are following methods and principles from which Europe and America have much advanced. The theory is that we must pass through the

stages through which other nations have passed to reach the position of advantage which they are occupying today. We are often told that even in Great Britain, political progress was not so rapid as we desire it to be. There is a fallacy underlying this statement which the Jingo opponents of our rights ignore. They are right if they mean that democracy and democratic institutions must grow and the pace must not be forced. But they are entirely wrong, if they mean that democracy should grow by methods and in shapes which the experience of the other parts of the world has declared to be wrong, harmful and undemocratic. Moreover, they ignore that there is a direct incitement to violence in this criticism of theirs. Must we go through revolutions of the kind through which Britain has passed in order to get to democracy ? Has the world's experience nothing to teach us even if our rulers do not propose to learn anything from it. Perhaps it does not matter much if we get Swarajya today or in five years. But it does matter that our development into Swarajya and our preparation for it should be on right lines and not on lines which have been discarded by the rest of the world or which, after being tried for over a century, have been found to be defective and wasteful. I will give an illustration. Europe and America have discovered that their system of education was more mechanical than organic, more wasteful, individualistic and competitive than practical, useful and co-operative. What is the aim of education ? A recent writer has said that "the object of education is to fit children into the life of the community. Every co-operative method conceivable, therefore, must be used in our schools for the end. It is at school that children begin to learn group initiative, group responsibility, in other words, social functioning. Every child must be shown his place in the life that builds and his relation to all others who are building. *Individual competition must, of course, disappear.* All must see that the test of success is ability to work with others, not to surpass others." (The italics are mine). Consciously or unconsciously the principle is being enforced and put into practice in different countries in different ways. But here we are glorying in methods which modern thought on the subject has long discredited and discounted. Knowing from personal experience of educational experiments in the United States and comparing them with the educational methods followed in the British Isles, and in India, I can say that while the United States are twenty-five years ahead of

British Isles, the latter are twenty-five years or even perhaps fifty years ahead of India. Another eminent publicist has said that the chief function of education is to teach the child to think and to act and not to repeat from memory the thoughts of others. Now is there any reason that we in India should make the same mistakes which Europe made before it discovered these truths? Why can't we follow the truth at once? Yet our lords and masters insist that, we must go through the same mill, no matter how much waste of human energy, human powers and human welfare might be involved therein. Take another illustration. The best modern thought is crying hoarse that big landlords holding large areas of land for purposes of profit and income in single hands are not good for any society; that they are like mill-stones hanging round the neck of nations; and that somehow or the other land should be freed from the incubus of landlordship and made available for cultivation by and further use of those who want to use it for the benefit of the whole society. Yet our Government is still actually engaged in creating big landlords. I am not speaking of landlords that have inherited lands or bought them in the past. I am referring to the action of the Government giving, or selling, big areas of land to persons who are capitalists, pure and simple. This can only be explained on the theory that those who are doing so, do not care for the future, they look only to the present. So long as they can get large sums of money for immediate use or can increase the revenues of their Government to pay higher salaries to themselves and others, it matters little to them what difficulties they are accumulating for the future democracy of India. Live for the present, and let the devil take care of the future is their motto. Similarly they are sowing thorns in a numerous other ways. The whole judicial system of British India, of which they are so proud, is rotten and disastrous to the best interests of society. But of this hereafter. Let us stick for the present to the theme we were following. What I want to impress on my countrymen is that while we are not free to frame a detailed scheme of Swarajya until we are free to put it into operation, we ought to state our principle and ideals and start discussing, analyzing and synthesizing them, so that we may be ready for the task when we are in a position to undertake it. Our first business is to educate people into right ideas and offer them opportunities for study and discussion. Our second business will be to prepare

ground enforcing such of them, when the time comes, as may be adopted by the collective will of the nation.

The kind or the nature of the nation we aim to build will also depend on our ideals. We must be clear on what we eventually want to grow into. Is the British state or the American state or the French state our ideal ? Must we imitate Europe ? Have we nothing of our own to contribute to the constitution of the world ? The present-day Europe is sick of democracy. It consists of warring classes, warring communities, and warring states. This is the natural result of the social philosophy it has been following for the last 200 years. It dominates the world in all the departments of the world's life ; it controls the markets of the globe, and decides the fate of people older and more spiritual than itself, yet its peoples, at the present moment are extremely unhappy and do not know what is going to happen there the next year or the year after that. In its desire to keep us under its thumb, Great Britain is forcing its material thought, and with it, its institutions upon us. We are great admirers of British character, of British literature, and may be of certain phases of British social life, but we cannot consider its political institutions to be the last word or even the best word in political philosophy or political life. Great Britain or for the matter of that the whole of Europe is sitting on the crest of an active volcano. A revolution may break there any day, and when it does break, it will involve the whole world. It may take ten or twenty-five or fifty years to come, but come it will, unless the European nations change the nature of their Governments and the character of their democracies in the meantime. The best and the greatest of the European thinkers are dissatisfied with the things as they are. 'Dissatisfied' is perhaps a very mild expression. We might have said 'disgusted'. The whole social thought of Europe is undergoing a silent but sure change. Europe may not be making rapid strides towards Bolshevism. Bolshevism itself is changing its principles and practices, but there cannot be any doubt that capitalism in its present form is doomed, and with it are doomed the capitalistic forms of Government. Whether this change will come peaceably or after cataclysmatic conflicts like those of Russia, no one can foretell. Under these circumstances shall we be wise in copying British models and in introducing British institutions almost in their entirety. Yet it is

exactly that which is happening. There are not any among the Indian publicists (at least none of note are known to me) who aim at Bolshevist ideal or Bolshevist methods. But there can be no doubt that unadultrated and unrelated capitalism and imperialism of the kind which prevails in Europe and which is being thrust on us against our will, leads directly to Bolshevism. Bolshevism is a reaction against this kind of social and economic life. We in India have never followed the European economic ideals and it is not to our interest to adopt them. What shall we not give to keep India free of that class war which is raging so furiously in Europe and which is threatening its peace and prosperity so imminently. But we are helpless to do anything in the matter. The choice offered to us is between the irresponsible, absolute, autocratic rule of the British bureaucracy or the hybrid system of Council Government, which has been brought into existence by the Act of 1919 with capitalistic preponderance in it. We have pronounced against both, and we shall not have either. What we want is freedom to live our life, to mould our institutions, and to build our democracy in our own way. It may be that we will make mistakes, but no mistakes can be more disastrous than the certain class war to which we are being led by the hand, at the present time.

I think it is our duty to declare that the form of representative Government which prevails in Great Britain, is not our goal; that the European form of democracy is not our ideal; and that we will rather be saved from the economic life and ideals of Europe than become rich by adopting them.

We want a democracy that will include all the people of India, which will recognise no masters, no slaves, no capitalists, and no mere wage-earners, no landlords and no mere cultivators, no governing class and no governed. We want a democracy in which all will be brothers, citizens and co-workers. This does not necessarily mean the abolition of property, or that there will be no rich and no poor in the future Indian democracy that we aim at. Rich and poor are comparative terms. There may be some rich and some poor in a democracy without the evils of a capitalistic society like that under the load of which modern Europe is groaning.

These are only stray thoughts about what we may want and

what we may not want. But the difficulty is that our wishes are being denied a place in our becoming what we want. Constitutions are being made for us in England and we are told that it is the will of the British Parliament that must prevail ; that we must agree to being made or unmade by the British Parliament, nay, that we must be happy over it and sing hallelujahs for our benefactors. The Non-co-operation movement is a protest against this stupid and arrogant assumption of divine powers on the part of a people which has become immersed in gross materialism, like England at the present time, and cannot even take care of their own poor and unemployed.

If the British Government were sincerely anxious to lead us to a state of 'Self-government', the best, the wisest and the most practical thing for it would be to leave us free to organize our own government, subject to such limitations and restrictions as to its actual operations as they may choose to impose if at all, to maintain their connection with us. This is the least they should do, but they won't do it.

17. THE HINDU-MUSLIM PROBLEM

THE HINDU-MUSLIM PROBLEM is the problem of India. We have heard and read much of Hindu-Muslim unity. It is always a matter of controversy between the Anglo-Indian and the Nationalist. The former asserts and the latter denies the impossibility of Hindus and Muslims uniting together to form one nation. The amount of unity or disunity existing at a particular moment is also always an issue. Yet it is a fact that from 1919 to the end of 1921 Hindus and Muslims of India were fairly united. It was during this period that for the first time in the history of India a *Kafir* preached from the pulpit of the biggest and historically the most important and the most magnificent mosque of Northern India.[1] It was during the same period that the *Malechhas* fraternised with the Hindus on the occasion of their religious festivals. It is also a fact that the amount of unity achieved in this short period, has since then melted down and for the last three years Hindus and Mussalmans have been at daggers drawn with each other to an extent never before known under British rule. All attempts to stem the tide have so far proved ineffectual. All efforts for finding a solution have been fruitless. It cannot be denied that at the moment of writing, the relations between the two communities are strained almost to the breaking point. Communal riots and scuffles are of more frequent occurrence than ever before. Mutual distrust and suspicion has reached the Nth. point. Even in Congress circles, in spite of much hugging and cooing, the relations between the leaders of the two communities are

A series of thirteen thought provoking articles by Lala Lajpat Rai which appeared in the *Tribune* and other leading Indian newspapers in November-December 1924. Reproduced from the *Tribune* of 26, 28, 30 November and 3, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17 December 1924.

not free from distrust and suspicion. Hindu-Muslim unity is always put in the fore-front of the Congress programme, but so far the leaders have failed to successfully grapple with the situation and find out a suitable solution. The explanation is obvious. Either they have lost influence with the masses or they are not sincere. I cannot accept the latter alternative, and thus it is only the former that is left to us to adopt.

Before Mahatma Gandhi was released[2] the whole country looked to the Yervada jail for the cure of the disease that had overtaken the body politic during his incarceration. All hopes were concentrated on one person, and that person being in jail, it was expected that his freedom would mean the freedom of the country from Hindu-Muslim quarrels. Both parties had faith in him. His leadership was acknowledged by all. There was not the least possible suspicion of his motives. He was the very personification of love, forbearance, trust and goodness. So it was believed that the "key to the Yervada jail" was the key to Hindu-Muslim unity. Providence in its own wisdom supplied that key and the Mahatma was released. It is now more than six months that he has been released. His health was very delicate when he was released, so delicate that he could not leave the hospital for about six weeks or so after his release. Yet with characteristic selflessness he immediately set himself to study the situation, to probe into the causes of this unhappy change. He left nothing unexplored. He met and heard the stories of both sides and also of those who professed to belong to no side. He made independent enquiries and thought and meditated. Eventually he issued a statement,[3] which sweet, reasonable and highly conciliatory though it was, failed to satisfy any one. When I say any one, I exclude that class (a fairly large and influential body) for whom his word is law and who will not question anything he says. If any distinction were to be made between the amount of satisfaction the statement gave to the Hindus and the Muslims, it will not be wrong to say that it gave less satisfaction to the former than to the latter. There is, indeed, a general impression among the Hindus that in apportioning blame and responsibility he was not quite impartial. There are classes of Hindus (most influential, energetic and active) whom his statement mortally offended and who have not hesitated to retaliate with words and resolutions of protest and anger. Whatever one may think of its justifiability or otherwise, this represents a frame of mind which no

one who is anxious to bring about lasting peace between the two communities can ignore. The solution which the Mahtama suggested and the cure he prescribed, have, I am afraid, appealed to none. Even his diagnosis is not so masterly as one had a right to expect from him. He has laid great stress on mere symptoms and has not gone deep into the underlying and predisposing causes. He had something to say about Mian Fazl-i-Husain and Swami Shraddhanand,[4] but he did not go into the forces that went to make the one and the other. No one doubts his honesty of purpose, his deep love for all, his desire for peace and his anxiety to bring about such a complete unity among Hindus and Muslims as to make their united demand for Swarajya irresistible and to make Swarajya itself, when attained, durable and progressive. But with all this the document is rather disappointing, and the solution suggested is on the face of it superficial, though noble and magnanimous in appearance. The events of the last six months are enough evidence of its utter failure both as a palliative or as a curative remedy.

Yet amidst all these disappointments and disconcerting events and circumstances and in the midst of resulting chaos, there is one fact which emerges boldly and which gives hope to all well-wishers of India. However divided Hindus and Muslims may be, however bitter their relations with each other, they are still united in their demand for Swarajya, in their opposition to the Government and in their hatred of the subjugation imposed upon them from without. It will stand to the eternal credit of Mahatma Gandhi that he has brought politics home to the masses of India, that he has created a wonderful and never to be effaced awakening in them and that he has produced a consciousness which marks the beginning of a real nationhood. With this solid and permanent achievement to the Mahatma's credit, there is no reason to despair of the future. His statement may not be as satisfying as one would have wished it to be, but he is still at the wheel and is hopeful as ever of being able to lead us through to the desired goal. But the one essential condition of success is that there must be no ignoring of facts and no clinging to shibboleths blown away by the wind of experience. If he will apply his mind to the removal of the real causes of Hindu-Muslim disunity, and keep his mind open as to methods and means, he may yet succeed. Even if he does not others may, given the right attitude, the right mind and the readiness to

apply the right remedy.

After the above was written on board the ship during my voyage to India, I have had further corroboration of statements made in what I have seen, read and observed since my landing at Bombay on the 18th of October, 1924. The two shocking news which I heard immediately on landing were about the Kohat tragedy and Mahatma Gandhi's fast.[5] The most disconcerting feature of the former was the total emigration of the Hindus from Kohat, out of fear of further Muslim attacks. I am not at present prepared to assert what the respective liabilities of the communities were in regard to this tragedy, but I have no doubt in my mind that the Government has throughout shown such utter inefficiency and incompetency as stands unique in the history of British rule in India. I am not very much enamoured of British rule, or for the matter of that of any foreign rule, and in spite of my great admiration for British character I have been a life-long critic of the British administration. Yet I always believed that the one justification for British rule in India was its ability to protect the minorities and to guarantee peace and security to them under any circumstances. The spectacle of a whole community of about 3.500 men, women and children marching away from their homes to distant places under Government transport arrangements and with Government help, for fear of being annihilated by an infuriated majority is, however, a conclusive proof of the falsity of this belief, because it can only mean one of the two things—either the insincerity or the inefficiency of British officials, at least in the North-West Frontier Province. I will assume here for the purposes of this argument that the Hindus of Kohat were in the first instance to blame, and that they had provoked the Muhammadans for a fatal attack on them ; still it was the duty of the British Government to keep the Hindus in Kohat, to protect them from further molestation by the Muhammadans, at any cost, to restore order and peace and then to proceed to try and punish the guilty persons. Practically what happened at Kohat was that the authorities considered themselves overpowered and incapable of granting the necessary security to the Hindus. We have often heard of lynch law. What is lynch law ? It is nothing else but the prevention of the ordinary course of justice and the preventing of the authorities from proceeding according to law. Was not the happening at Kohat an illustration of the same tendency ? The law demands that every accused person

should be fully protected from molestation by the accusers, until a court had found him guilty and sentenced him legally. Assuming that the Hindus of Kohat were in the position of accused persons, it was the duty of the Government to arrest them and keep them in safe custody until they could be placed before a court of justice and regularly tried. The British Government admittedly failed to do this at Kohat. Even assuming that the Hindus wanted to go away for fear of their lives, it was the duty of the Government to dissuade them, and provide sufficient military security to enable them to stay in their homes. No one wants to leave his home and property in the way the Kohat Hindus did, unless he felt that his life was no longer safe. This particular incident has disclosed a new phase of the communal strife which should be particularly noted by those who want to patch up and create an appearance of unity without going to the root of the problem.

As regards Mahatma Gandhi's fast, it is an open secret that the desecration of Hindu temples, one after another, at Amethi, Gulbarga, Kohat and other places, and the tragedy of Kohat gave him such a shock that he considered it his duty to undergo a penance for his misunderstanding and mishandling the Hindu-Muslim situation during the last three years. For the first time he felt miserable at the thought that he, who had striven his best to obtain Hindu co-operation for the saving of the Muhmmadan "temple" Khilafat, had to see desecration of Hindu temples by tens, in most cases without any provocation, at the hands of Muhammadans, The sense of helplessness and disappointment generated by this shock impelled him to impose a purificatory penance of twenty-one days' fast on him, in the hope that whilst he purified himself of any sin that he might have committed unconsciously he would be able to create an atmosphere which might give opportunities of improving Hindu-Muslim relations. My first feeling was one of disapproval. On reaching Delhi, however, I felt that the impulse which forced him to take the vow could not perhaps be satisfied otherwise. Similar was my feeling about the Unity Conference.[6] I don't think the Unity Conference has solved the problem or could possibly solve it, but on the whole it has been useful in paving the way for the right understanding of the problem with its various complications and implications. Mahatma Gandhi is now resolved to devote the best part of his energies, time and attention to the solution of this problem. From the bottom of my

heart I wish him success, but he will not succeed unless he devotes himself wholeheartedly to the understanding of the real causes that underlie the present situation, and scrupulously avoids proceeding on assumptions and presumptions engendered by affectionate relations with friends, and well-meaning but ineffectual professions of devotion on their part. He must adopt a scientific attitude towards this question and proceed by scientific methods to find out the root causes of trouble and its possible solutions. I have resigned my position of leadership in the Congress in order to be free to express myself. I am going to speak the truth plainly and untrammelled by any delicate feeling about the responsibilities of leadership, and unaffected by what anyone might think of me. Anybody may criticise me, but I will not enter into controversies. I have considered it necessary to say all this before I start giving expression to my views on the subject.

II

In the discussions at the Unity Conference held at Delhi one thing struck me very forcibly. That was the fact that so many of the ablest and most patriotic Muhammadan youngmen as well as a few Hindus were obsessed with the idea of "absolute rights". Time after time it was said that the Muhammadans had an inherent right to slaughter cows and that that right could only be curtailed by their own voluntary sacrifice. It was on the basis of absolute right that draft resolutions had actually been prepared by a number of youngmen who counted among them some of the most brilliant and self-sacrificing workers in the Congress organization. And yet, as I have pointed out more than once, the idea of absolute rights is a fallacious one and has really no foundation in law. Pandit Motilal Nehru, the President, also took pains to explain the same point of view. I am not quite sure, however, that the explanations were quite satisfactory and as the idea seems to me to be shared by a large number of men, I would like to deal with it at some length.

I contend that there is no such thing as an absolute right vested in any individual or in any community forming part of a nation; that all rights are relative, that no society can remain intact even for twenty-four hours on the basis of absolute rights, that the idea of absolute rights was exploded long ago, because it was found to

be not only wrong in theory but pernicious in practice. I have no desire to encumber this paper with quotations from the writings of great thinkers and legislators of the West. The point seems to me to be so simple as not to require much labouring. All organic relations depend upon the mutual obligations of the members composing the organism. No part of the organism has any absolute right. Firstly, all the rights of an individual are subject to the equal rights of others, which fact creates duties and obligations on the part of the different members of a society towards each other. In a well ordered social organism no one has a right to do anything which will unreasonably clash with the legal interests of any one else. Nay, in order to secure goodwill and progress, the more advanced members of a social organism have sometimes to go further and sacrifice their interests for the commonweal, or for the benefit of the other members of the community. The protection of the poor, solicitude for providing for the necessities of those who cannot look after themselves, the widows, the orphans, the blind, the lame, the aged, the minor, etc., all fall under this category.

There was a time in the history of Europe when great emphasis was laid on the rights of man. That was the time of the French Revolution. Thomas Paine's "Rights of Man" was a typical reflection of the mentality of that generation. Within less than fifty years it was found that the theory was entirely fallacious and pernicious. Mazzini's "Duties of Man" was a complete and convincing reply to Paine's "Rights of Man". The French Revolution was based on the Rights of Man and the constitution with the declaration of the rights of man. The American constitution makes the same attempt. In actual practice, however, the rights are subject to great limitations in both. Take, for example, the liberty of speech and the liberty of the press which are guaranteed by both the constitutions. Can any one, in his senses, contend that either the French or the American Government is in the least deterred from curtailing these rights whenever it thinks it best in the interest of the nation to do so? I happened to be in the United States during the War, and I saw with my own eyes how the so-called fundamental rights guaranteed to the people by the constitution were taken away by them under one pretence or another, either by Federal Legislation or by the action of the Government. Every one seems to have the right not to be forced to fight against his will. Yet

during the Great War, this right was denied by all the several governments concerned and everywhere people were forced into the army against their will. Everybody knows what a great fight the conscientious objectors had to make, against this curtailment of their so-called rights and the sufferings which they were made, in consequence, to undergo. An individual may have an absolute right to think what he wishes, but the moment it comes to the expression of the thought in speech and action, his right is hedged round by conditions and limitations. This is the legal and the constitutional aspect of the question. As regards its ethical aspect, it is absolutely clear that it is nobler to emphasize duties rather than rights. People who insist on rights rather than duties become selfish, proud and self-centred. Those who emphasise duties, are quite the reverse. The highest dovelopment of humanity and of the spirit of service requires greater emphasis being laid on duties than on rights. That is the teaching of almost all the great religions of the world if properly understood and rightly interpreted. That is the teaching of Buddha, Christ and Gandhi. It is also the lesson of actual day to day experience. It is certainly productive of infinitely greater good in a community if its members are inspired by the ideal of doing nothing which may be painful to other members, even if this means the denial to themselves of some of their so-called rights. Anyway one thing is certain. No member of a society can be allowed to exercise his rights in such a way as to clash with the just rights of others. The two rights must be so adjusted and co-related that they might be exercised without doing injury to each other.

I was really astonished to find that some of these youngmen who have been in the closest touch with Mahatma Gandhi, should have been found harping on this doctrine of rights, because, as already stated and as was pointed out at the Conference itself by Mr. Rajagopalachari, his teaching is obviously based more on the doctrine of duties than on that of rights. I would advise my young countrymen to think over this question a little more deeply, to read the literature on the subject a little more carefully, and to free themselves from the obsession of this pernicious doctrine of rights. Unless this is done, there is no hope for unity in India. We must always remember that we are a sort of polyglot nation, much less homogeneous than any of those European or Western nations who have had to fight for their freedom. Such a country can never win its

freedom, or, having won freedom, can never maintain it unless the various communities composing its people are inspired more by the ideal of duties than of rights. No unity is possible if every one insists on his pound of flesh, and without unity there is no freedom.

III

All those who aim at creating a United India, should remember that India is a land of many faiths and many religions ; that these faiths and religions, again, are divided into sections and sub-sections ; that these sections and sub-sections practise numerous religious observances ceremonials and rituals and that some of these rituals and observances, conflict with one another. It is impossible for any Government to guarantee to all these religions, sections and sub-sections, full and complete freedom in the matter of the observance of all their rituals and ceremonials especially when they are in conflict with one another. Some of these ceremonials and observances, moreover, are inhuman, cruel and immoral. To insist upon, and to emphasise the right of every community, small or large, to a strict and full observance of all their religious rituals and cermonials is, therefore, a clear impossibility, besides being directly opposed to the idea of a United India. The British Government, in spite of its professions of religious neutrality have, from time to time, interfered in the matter of religious practices ; for example they stopped by legislation the inhuman practices of *Sati* and infanticide which Hindu orthodoxy contended was a part of its religion.[7]

It is not my purpose here to enter into details but a student of the religions of India will easily be able to confirm my statement that the advent of British rule in India, followed by a diffusion of Western knowledge and Western sciences and accompanied by a revival of the study of Sanskrit and Arabic, led to a number of religious reform movements being started, in order to purge the religions of India of all such superstitions and excesses as had been engendered in them by centuries of ignorance and blind faith. In the light of their new knowledge, people found that many of the rites and ceremonials and observances practised in the name of a religion were not sanctioned by the scriptures of that religion and were opposed to the spirit of the founders and the early expounders of that faith. It cannot, however, be denied that there are communities in India who still believe in the necessity and efficacy of various kinds of

rites and ceremonials which are positively inhuman and immoral. Society cannot interfere with the beliefs of any one, but no progressive society can allow such practices to be carried on with impunity even in the name of religion as are revolting to the sense of humanity and morality of the vast bulk of its members. Even allowing the largest possible liberty in the matter of religious observances, no nation can for all time tolerate such practices.

From a political point of view it is all the more necessary that religious differences be narrowed down. It is obvious that if every one in India is, as of right, entitled to practise in the name of religion, whatever he believes to be a part of his faith no unity is possible. The idea of a United India demands that emphasis should be laid more on the points on which different religions agree than on the differences that divide them. The idea of a United India necessarily demands, therefore, the rationalising of religion and religious practices to the farthest extent possible. The claim that every one has a right to full and unrestricted observance of all that he believes to be a part of his religion cannot possibly stand the test of analysis. Not only is everyone's right limited by the just rights of others, but insistence on the observance of conflicting ceremonials has to be actively discouraged and all such ideas based on false notions of religion as increase hatred, estrange one community from another, and create barriers between different communities and thus make communal consciousness more acute and bitter, have to be gradually eliminated.

Unfortunately for us even religious reform movements in India have in some cases taken a wrong turn. They have brought into prominence the observance of very many rites and ceremonies which do not form an integral part of the religions concerned and have nothing to do with *Dharma*. Communal consciousness, again, has come to be synonymous with the observance of such petty ceremonials as perpetuate differences and form a solid wall separating one community from another. The Arya Samaj, the Muhammadan reform movement and Sikh reform movement all illustrate this tendency and it cannot be denied that Mahatma Gandhi himself and the Khilafat movement, of which he was the strongest pillar, have also accentuated this feeling.

Mahatma Gandhi's personality is, to a certain extent, a puzzle.

In practice he is a liberal of liberals and a broad-minded humanitarian. He declares untouchability to be inhuman and is pledged to root it out, in spite of the fact that tens of millions of Hindus regard it as an essential part of their religion. In theory, on the other hand, he sometimes seems to be supporting narrow-mindedness, even superstitious sectarianism in some of its aspects. This has brought about a reaction and has given a new life to those Pandits and Maulvis who, before his advent, were fast losing influence among their respective communities. The result is that within the last three or four years, Hindu sectarians have become more bigoted than they were ever before, and Muhammadan and Sikh sectarians still more so. The reactionaries amongst the followers of these religions have again come into power and are exercising a baneful influence in keeping the communities apart from each other, and in bringing into prominence very many petty observances practised in the name of religion, and calculated to divide instead of uniting the several communities.

I have no intention of offending anybody's susceptibilities, but if the existing conditions are properly analysed it will be seen that sectarianism and narrow-minded bigotry have been very much strengthened within the last three years. The Khilafat movement has particularly strengthened it among the Muhammadans, and it has not been without its influence and reaction on the Hindus and Sikhs. We do not ignore the important part which communal representation under the Reforms scheme has played in bringing into existence strong communal consciousness, thus making the relations between the two principal communities more acute and bitter than ever before, but our present concern is with this particular aspect of the matter.

If we really and honestly want a United India, we, i. e. the different religious communities in this country shall have to make a clear distinction between essentials and non-essentials in religion. Full religious freedom does not mean or imply full and unfettered liberty in the matter of observances and practices which affect the just rights of other communities or otherwise injure their feelings. The assertion of such a right, either individual or communal, and the belief that the British Government will enforce the practice of such a right, has done a great deal of mischief in India. Take, for example, the case of the North-West Frontier Province. In a village

where the population is 99 per cent. Muhammadan and only 1 per cent. Hindu, the assertion by a Hindu of his right to carry his idol in procession along the streets of the village where many mosques are situated, would be an extremely foolish act. The assertion of the right of sacrificing cow by a Muslim in a place like Ajudhia, Mathura, Bindraban or Hardwar would be of the same nature. Unhappily the British rule has encouraged both Hindus and Muhammadans to assert such rights and to fight if they are denied. The philosophy of individualism and the idea of absolute religious freedom, both of which, as I have already pointed out, are wholly wrong and which in India are at the present time directly traceable to British rule, have taken such a firm root in the minds of Indians that they are playing a havoc in all phases of our national life ; and consequently the first step towards the creation of a real national life would be a widespread propaganda carried on to educate public opinion in matters of this kind on right lines. To me it is an unpleasant paradox in this connection and a puzzling commentary on the present situation that men and women who break every day of their lives almost every canon of Hinduism or Islam by acts of omission or commission, should not only pose as leaders of their respective communities but should actually be accepted as such.

The sum total of my reasoning is this, that one of the causes of the present tension between Hindus and Muhammadans has been the unfortunate revival of the idea of *absolute* freedom in the matter of religious observances. As I have already said, no one can interfere with or question the belief of another. Such belief is entirely the concern of the individual so long as it does not enforce itself in action. But when we come to observances we have to consider the environment in which we live and in the interest of peace and neighbourly goodwill, to avoid social collision, have to sacrifice a certain amount of our freedom.

In a country like India, to inculcate the idea that every religious practice so far observed or presumed to be sanctioned or enjoined by one's faith, is holy and sacred and unchangeable, is, in my humble judgment, mischievous, and requires to be counteracted. At the present stage of its development India requires more of rationalism and toleration than orthodoxy and bigotry. Unhappily during the last decade we have created an atmosphere which smells

more of orthodoxy and bigotry than of rationalism and toleration. The non-co-operation movement itself has materially contributed to the creation of this atmosphere. It was unfortunate that the Khilafat movement in India should have taken its stand on a religious rather than political basis. There were political grounds to support it. It was still more unfortunate that Mahatma Gandhi and the leaders of the Khilafat movement should have brought religion into such prominence in connection with a movement which was really and fundamentally more political than religious. The desire to seek religious sanction for the various items of the Non-co-operation programme was another great blunder. It led directly to the revival of a sectarian zeal and to the re-enthroning of influences and forces which were antagonistic to the idea of a united India. Non-co-operation which was based on the idea of Hindu-Muslim unity, thus became one of the forces favouring disunity. Never before did I see educated Hindus, Mussalmans and Sikhs attaching so great an importance to insignificant and petty things in the name of religion as they do now. Shastras and Shariats have been studied and requisitioned only to create an atmosphere of narrowness and bigotry. I have seen young Muslim gentlemen being vigorously attacked by Maulvis for daring to shave their beards, and all India saw the spectacle of a Muslim President attempting to stop the playing of instrumental music at an annual meeting of the National Congress. We have heard of many more amusing claims being put forward in the name of religion, which could never have been imagined before. The last four years, by the way, have brought into existence a legion of Maulanas, Pandits and Gyanis whom no one had ever credited with any religious sanctity or spiritual prestige.

I mean no offence to any one, but I am stating these facts to illustrate my point. Take, for instance, the playing of music before mosques. In my experience of the last forty years I had never felt that the question was of any importance at all and yet I had been a constant reader of newspapers, and a faithful observer of events. It is similarly a matter of pain to me to notice that some of the most broad-minded Hindus who have travelled all over the world should feel the necessity of observing any sort of untouchability towards Muhammadans. You cannot expect India to be ever politically united as a single nation, as long there are Indians who believe tha it is against their religion to drink water or eat food touched by a

non-Hindu. I remember a great Samaj leader once denouncing Congressmen for having sold their religion for the sake of unity and the selling consisted, in his opinion, in their freely eating and drinking with the Muhammadans. The fact is that a large number of Hindus and Muslims who profess a desire for Hindu-Muslim unity and who talk of a united India, do not realize that unity has a price which they will have to pay before it can be achieved. I do not maintain that either Hindus or Muhammadans should sacrifice the essentials of their religion for the sake of unity. For me, personally, the essentials of Dharma are very few, indeed, and they are such as make for unity not only in India but throughout the world. But I have no right to and do not expect that the large body of Hindus and Muhammadans will share my views on this point. I must, however, say frankly that unity is a dream never to be realised unless Hindus and Muhammadans, Sikhs and Christians, make up their minds to be more liberal and rational in their religious and social life than they at present are.

The narrow religious atmosphere which at present dominates Hindu and Muhammadan and Sikh communal life is fatal to the idea of a united India, and the sooner the leaders of all these communities realize the truth the better for us all. I cannot subscribe to the proposition that either Hinduism or Islam is so narrow as to make it impossible for the followers of the two religions to become politically united. To be frank, we will have to follow Europe in this matter if we really desire political freedom. Religion must be divorced from politics. Social life must be broadened and political life based only on broad national policy. I don't mean to say that religion should be divorced from our lives or that our political structure be divorced of religious influences in the higher sense of the term. Healthy religious influences are undoubtedly necessary for the development of character, personal as well as national. I say nothing against religion or Dharma in this sense, but I do mean that ceremonial aspect of religion should only be the concern of individuals or of communities and should not be permitted to create barriers or political distinctions between the followers of different religions or between different religious communities as such.

P.S.—Since writing the above, I have re-read Mahatma Gandhi's articles on Hinduism and on Hindu and Muslim unity. His views on Hinduism are fairly liberal, however much one may differ from his

explanation of the caste system and from his interpretation of the worship of cow. In one of his articles he says : "I hold that we may not dignify every trifle into a matter of deep religious importance :" and further : "In all non-essential matters, a Hindu must yield for the asking." As an instance of non-essentials he remarks : "One can easily appreciate the Mussalman sentiment of having solemn silence near a mosque the whole of 24 hours." In the whole of his writings I have failed to come across one sentence where he administers similar admonition to the Muslims. His pleadings for the protection of cow are couched in a different style. I have come across other observations, somewhere to the effect that he would not have either of the communities give away even a little of their religious faith for the sake of unity.

IV

The observations made in the last article raise several cognate questions, which may profitably be discussed before we come to the political and economic aspects of the problem. Are the Hindu and Muhammadan religions and cultures so fundamentally different, or to be more exact, so antagonistic, as to make their followers naturally and instinctively hostile to each other ? If so, what chances are there of our being able to bring about a unity between the two ?

It is said that Hinduism is not a dogma, that it is almost impossible to define it, that it is a system of life of which caste is an essential feature ; and that as long as caste is there, it is impossible to make it sufficiently tolerant and progressive, so as to make unity and co-operation with other religious communities either easy or even possible. Yet it is an admitted fact that in spite of a rigid caste system and a rigid code of social morality, Hinduism is the most tolerant of all the great religions of the world. Hinduism does not ridicule or despise other peoples' beliefs or faiths : nay it does not question other peoples' right to follow their own faiths and attain spiritual satisfaction thereby. It lays no exclusive claim to be the only royal road to salvation. It is not out to convert other people and thereby save them from hell or perdition. In fact it expressly lays down that for different people, in different stages of physical, mental and spiritual developments, there are different ways of approaching God and obtaining satisfaction and salvation. To its own followers it allows the fullest freedom to believe what they like and to worship as they please.

Even its rigid social code and its caste system are in the melting pot. While formerly Hindu society allowed its members to go out of it, nay actually expelled and outcasted them on the slightest pretext and on the flimsiest possible ground, at the present moment it is prepared to make all kinds of allowances for the disregard of its social code by its members and is anxious to keep them within its fold. There was a time when high caste families, rich, influential and cultured, were outcasted and thrown out of Hindu society on the most intangible grounds, out of sheer suspicion and bigotry. Now even open beef-eaters are tolerated, excused and honoured. There are numerous men and women in Hindu society, honoured and respected members of it, who openly defy and violate the most important canons of its social code—men who have not only married out of caste but even foreigners, men who eat prohibited food and make no secret of it, who take prohibited drinks without any efforts to conceal the fact, men who ridicule the Vedas and are atheists. We find that amongst these latter are some of the most notable leaders of Hindu society. How can we explain this strange change? To what is this due, and what does this signify? To my mind the change indicates the realization by the society and its members of a higher Hindiusm which is above forms and formalities—a culture that is more of the mind and of the spirit than consisting in eating, drinking, or even marrying, along certain accepted lines. It is this realization which makes men and women who have risen above forms and formulas to still feel proud of Hinduism, to be anxious for its assured continuance in their country for the benefit of their children and their children's children. It is this realization which explains the phenomenon of beef-eaters, husbands of foreign women, scoffers of the Vedas, in short, extremely unorthodox and outwardly un-Hindu people champion the cause of Hinduism, standing shoulder to shoulder with the orthodox in the defence of their temples, shrines, festivals, customs etc., and resenting as strongly as the latter, the attacks of non-Hindu missionaries, preachers and proselytizers on Hinduism and Hindu community. But there is another reason also which explains the phenomenon. The material and political prospects of this class are bound up with those of the rest of their community. It was not so very long ago that many of these people dissociated themselves from the great bulk of the Hindus, while

some of them openly said, rather with pride, that they were not Hindus. The recognition by Government of the communal system changed the situation. They found that except as Hindus they had no status and their children would have none unless they chose to adopt Islam. This they were not prepared to do. So, willy-nilly, they had to declare themselves Hindus and seek elections from general non-Muslim constituencies, basing their claim on their championship of Hindu rights.

Unlike Hinduism, Islam is a faith of dogmas and doctrines. Every Muhammadan must believe not only in the existence of God without a second (*La Allah Il Allah*) but also that Muhammad was His prophet and that the Quran is his final word. He must also believe, according to the orthodox school, that Muhammad was the last of the prophets and whatever he said and did is binding on all his faithful followers. There have been expounders of Islam who have tried to raise it to a kind of high occultism, but their efforts have not met with any considerable success, and Islam remains, to all intents and purposes, with the majority of its followers, what it has been all through centuries past. My Muslim friends will pardon me if I venture to say that too great an insistence on dogma has been the bane of Islam, the cause of its political downfall, and that unless it is given up, it will stand in the way of Islam ever regaining its lost position as a world-wide political factor. Islam is as much divided and sub-divided into sections and factions as Christianity once was and perhaps to this day is.

The division and sub-division of Hindu society into sects have one redeeming feature. The general tolerance of Hinduism prevents them from destroying each other. History shows that this cannot be said of Islam.

Religious intolerance of the severest kind has been a handmaid of chivalry, bravery, zeal, learning and piety among the Muslims throughout Muslim history. Three out of the four first Khalifas were murdered by their fellow Muslims. The pages of Muslim history are full of similar acts done by religious zealots or political adventurers. One would have thought that recent events in Turkey and Egypt[8] would have chastened Islam at least in this respect. But the stoning to death of an Ahmadia by the orders of the Government of Kabul and the approval of that barbarous act by some of the most prominent and educated leaders of Muslim India have

shown that the canker is still there and has not lost an iota of its original violence. Egypt and Turkey, however, seem to be in a different mood. It appears that they, at any rate, have realized the necessity of marching with the times and making a clear distinction between essentials and non-essentials. The Indian "Maulanas" may call them "bad Mussalmans", but they do not care as long as they can retain and protect their political freedom. A religiously "bad Mussalman" (A Turkish Nationalist told me that an Indian Mussalman once called him a bad Mussalman, because he occasionally took a peg) is an infinitely better person than a Mussalman who bows his head to a foreign power and who prates of his 'Shara' to perpetuate his bondage. The "bad Mussalmans" of Turkey are in my eyes infinitely superior to those pious Mussalmans of India who, though professing great regard for the most insignificant and minor details of "Shara" and "Hadis", are willing tools of a foreign bureaucracy and are purchasing places and preferments for themselves and their fellow Mussalmans by resorting to various questionable means. It is a sign of the times that while Mussalman's piety finds such eloquent expression in its fights with Hinduism it is dumb and powerless in the presence of leaders who openly defy, by acts of omission and commission some of the most sacred canons of Islamic Law. Is it not a fact that just as in the case of Hindus, Muslims accept as leaders, men who do not believe in the infallibility of the Quran, who disclaim any faith in "*Hadis*" and "*Fiqah*", who openly and undisguisedly drink wine, eat bacon, do not say prayers and do not observe fast in the month of Ramzan, not to mention minor matters, such as their opinions about *purdah*, keeping beard etc. ? It comes to this that while Hindus and Mussalmans are prepared to be led by men who openly flout all the sacred canons of their respective faiths, they are not prepared to relax by a hair's breadth the severity of their customs and rituals and observances, in order to live in peace and neighbourly goodwill with one another. A united India will mean freedom for both Hindus and Mussalmans but they prefer the strict observance of the most futile and non-essential elements of their respective faiths to freedom. Is this not a sight for the gods to weep over ?

I am firmly convinced that we cannot create a united India and cannot win Swaraj in any shape, unless the religious canker

is removed. "*Mazhab*" (in its narrow sense) as my beloved friend Stokes[9] often reminds me, is the curse of India, and as long as it rules supreme, there is no hope for India. The idea that we can remain "good Hindus" and "good Mussalmans" *in the narrowest sense of these terms,* and yet win Swaraj, is in my judgment, an absurd one. It has done a lot of mischief within the last four years. I still believe that we do not need to depart in any manner or degree from the true and essential spirit of Islam and Hinduism in order to be free and united. There are good and true Christians, Roman Catholics and Protestants, Presbyterians and Anglicans, Jews and Gentiles in Great Britain, France and Germany, but the earnestness of their religious faith does not prevent their being free citizens of their respective countries. A hundred years ago, who could have imagined that a Jew would one day be the Prime Minister of Great Britain, another a Secretary of State, and a third a Viceroy of India ?[10]

The Jews are perhaps the smallest religious community in Great Britain. They never claimed any special representation in Parliament or any specific share of Government posts. In fact about 150 years ago the communal consciousness of the Roman Catholics and Protestants in Great Britain was as keen and exclusive as that of the Hindus and Mussalmans today. For a long time the Roman Catholics were excluded from Parliament and could not be employed in any Government office, and still they never claimed any special representation. Now all these disabilities have been removed and Roman Catholics, equally with the Protestants, hold the highest positions in the State. In this matter the example of Great Britain has been followed in all the great countries of Europe and in the United States of America, and the result is what we see. I am certain in my mind that Turkey, Egypt and Syria are going to do the same thing and if they do not, they will never be free. Does any one expect India to be the only exception to the rule ?

V

The considerations urged in the last article are so important and relevant that I will not apologise for laying further emphasis upon them. Every possible effort should be made (a) to integrate the different religions as much as possible by emphasizing the points

on which they agree, by eliminating non-essentials and by restricting essential differences within the narrowest limits ; (b) to remove all barriers to free social intercourse between the communities, which do not go to the root of any one's faith.

Let us take the question of untouchability. I find no sanction for it in the Hindu Shastras. I find no mention of it in history. As far as the Hindu untouchables are concerned, most sensible Hindus are agreed that in their case, at least, it is senseless, inhuman and intolerable, because of the fact of their being followers of the same religion and members of the same community as the so-called higher castes. Some of the advanced reformers like the Arya Samajists are prepared at once to raise them high in the social scale by investing them with the sacred thread and starting inter-dining and inter-marrying with them. Even the most orthodox are in many cases prepared to let them on their floor, to admit them in common schools and to remove all outward and palpable signs of pollution by touch. In their case, at least, untouchability is doomed and will, I believe, disappear in a very short time. The ultra-orthodox will no doubt foam and fret, oppose and resist. Here and there they will outcaste and break social relations with the reformers. But the number of the latter is so large already and is growing so much larger and larger as to reduce the orthodox to impotence. Take the case of Mahatma Gandhi or of Seth Jamnalal Bajaj or of Swami Shraddhanand or of Lala Hans Raj. Has the orthodox Hindu community the will and the power to excommunicate them and throw them out of the pale of Hinduism ? I am not in favour of forcing pace and wounding the feelings and the susceptibilities of the orthodox, but I know that in this respect at least orthodoxy is doomed. Its days are literally numbered.

In the case of non-Hindus, untouchability takes a different shape. In their case, no pollution by touch is recognised. But it is not allowed to eat or drink food or water touched by them. This practice is also doomed. As I have said, I can find no authority for it in the Hindu Shastras. It was probably based on the idea of non-co-operation with foreign rulers who happened to be beef-eaters. It was good and effective as long as the Muslims in India

were the enemies of the people or their conquerors, and the Hindus could hope to turn them out by establishing a Hindu Raj. It is no longer possible. The enemies of the 8th to 16th centuries form an important and intergal part of the Indian population today. They are neither foreigners nor rulers. Racially they are, in the vast majority of cases, the bone of our bone and the flesh of our flesh. Formerly, a Hindu who once drank water or ate food touched by a Mussalman was immediately lost to Hinduism, never again to return to its fold. Thanks to Guru Gobind Singh, Swami Dayanand and other reformers, that idea has been exploded and exploded for good. Even born Muhammadans can now be admitted into Hindu society. Under the circumstances there is no excuse now for continuing or perpetuating this prejudice. But prejudices like these take time to die. Die it must, why not then hasten to destroy it by active efforts. I know that some distinguished Hindus will take exception to my statement and may even denounce me for it. But I am out to speak what I believe to be the truth and the whole truth. It is absolutely necessary for producing an atmosphere of neighbourly goodwill and for creating a United India that the existing prejudice should be given up. You cannot make a united nation of communities between whom such barriers in the matter of social intercourse are recognised and enforced. Moreover, the abolition of the practice will be useful to Hinduism in another way. It will remove all fears of forced conversion by making a Hindu drink water or eat food touched by a Muslim. It may be noted that I am advocating the removal of the restriction as a barrier and not the necessary introduction of interdining.

Take another case, an equally important matter. There was a time when in the eyes of the Muslims all Hindus were *Kafirs* and it was implicitly believed that the property and the women of a *Kafir* were legal prizes of war for a Muslim. The times are changed and with it the conception of a *Kafir* must be changed. No Hindu who believes in and worships one God, can by any stretch of language be called a *Kafir* unless the definition of a *Kafir* be that every non-Muslim is a *Kafir*. In the eyes of a large number of Muslims the latter is the right definition of a *Kafir* and according to Ulemas even those Muslims are *Kafirs* who, although believing in Allah and His prophet, do not follow other tenets of Islam as understood and interpreted by them. For example they pronounced Sir Syed

Ahmed to be a *Kafir* and they denounce the followers of Mirza of Qadian also as *Kafirs*. If they are right, then H. H. the Aga Khan is the biggest *Kafir* and so are Ghazi Mustafa Kamal Pasha and Zaghlul Pasha also. If then their definition of a *Kafir* is right, there can be no peace between them and the rest of the world. In that case all this talk of Hindu-Muslim Unity i superficial, absurd and hypocritical. In the course of the Non-co-operation campaign, some of the Ulemas cited particular "ayats" (sections) of the Quran to prove that Muslims could enter into lawful agreement with such non-Muslims as were friendly towards them, against those who were inimically disposed towards them, brought fire and sword into the homes of the latter and otherwise injured them. Now to be frank, this kind of special pleading does not appeal to my intellect. It is not a mechanical union of this kind that will make a nation of us. What is needed is a chemical union. Are the Hindus "*Kafirs*"? If they are, all talk of unity between Hindus and Mussalmans is absurd.

No Mussalman or body of Mussalmans in India or outside has any legal right or authority to bind other Mussalmans. Leaders come and go ; there is no one in India who can speak in the name of the whole Muslim community. The pact of Lucknow had no value or binding force unless it was accepted by Government and embodied in law. No agreement made or arrived at a meeting of the Congress or Khilafat has any binding legal value. Anything agreed to by the present leaders or even the Jamiat-ul-Ulema[11] can be questioned by any other Muslim and with even greater force by the succeeding generations. Even an agreement embodied in law or forming part of a declaration of rights is of no binding value on the future generations of Hindus and Muslims. Laws change with the law-makers. A law made today may be of no value fifty years hence. Under the circumstances, agreements or pacts won't take us sufficiently far. What is needed is a "change of heart". All efforts of the present generation of Muslim leaders should be directed to removing the idea that the Hindus are *Kafirs*.

Ordinarily, the relations of Hindus and Mussalmans in villages and small towns are most cordial. The present tension is the development of the last fifty years. But what has happened during the last three years has beaten all record. Some people are of opinion that special efforts have been made to bring about the state of

things to prove that India is unfit for Swaraj and that no further advance is safe in the matter of political reforms. In certain quarters there is a tendency to throw the entire responsibility on the officials of the foreign Government. While sharing the belief that the latter have had a hand in it, I cannot help saying that Muslim Maulavis, Maulanas and Associations have had a much larger, in fact a lion's share, in it, though, of course, it is not meant that the Hindus are quite innocent. The fact that wherever there have been riots between Hindus and Mussalmans, the latter have looted the former, desecrated their temples and assaulted their women, betrays the widespread diffusion of the idea that the Hindus are "Kafirs", that the Muslims are in a state of war with them, and that in fighting them, their property and women are "halal" for the Muslims. There are some persons who maintain that this has been the work of *Goondas*. I say, no ! The riots have been inspired by cleverer brains than those of the *Goondas*, they have been encouraged and supported by influential people. It is only the actual outrages that have been committed by *Goondas*, fanatics and poor people.

An esteemed Muslim leader has propounded the theory that the fact that the Hindus are rich and Muslims are poor, explains these riots. Assuming the explanation to be correct, how does he explain the irrebuttable fact that poor Mussalmans do not loot their rich fellow religionists ? The real explanation is that the latter are Muslims and the Hindus are *Kafirs*. This notion has been rubbed into the mind of the Muslim masses and Muslim middle classes, by clever propagandists and influential leaders. It is the duty of the Muslim nationalist leaders to inaugurate and carry on an extensive propaganda to destroy this notion and to impress on the minds of their co-religionists the truth that Hindus are not *Kafirs* and that even on the occasion of fights and quarrels, their temples, their women and their property are inviolable and unassailable.

VI

In this article I propose to trace the history of the evolution of the idea of Communal Representation and separate communal interests. It was in the seventies of the 19th century that the movement for the establishment of the M. A. O. College at Aligarh

was started and it was about the same time that the Arya Samaj was founded. The idea of a united India was present to the minds of the founders of both when they met at Delhi on the occasion of the Imperial Durbar of 1877. But they soon found out that it was impossible to unite India on the basis of a common faith. The Indian National Congress had not then come into existence, and the idea at back of Sir Syed's mind was to found an institution which would enable Indian Muhammadans to make up for lost time in the acquisition of that Western knowledge which was, in his eyes, *sine qua non* of worldly prosperity both under the Government and otherwise.

Sir Syed was materially helped and supported in the development of his idea by influential Hindus. Rich Hindus and Hindu princes liberally subscribed to the funds of the Aligarh M. A. O. College. But the idea of a denominational college necessarily carries with it emphasis on communal characteristics and communal glories. It unavoidably increases communal consciousness. So it was here. Again, the success and the popularity of Aligarh College depended largely on its *alumni* finding high and lucrative posts under Government. At first the great Syed's personal influence with the high officials sufficed for the purpose, but it was soon found that it was necessary to supplement it by insistence on communal claims. Thus comparative statistics of Hindus and Muslims in Government services became a characteristic feature of the deliberaions of the Muhammadan Educational Conference even in its early days. Sir Syed was a great religious reformer. By his liberal expositions of Islam and by his attempts to rationalise Islam, he drew upon himself the wrath of the Muslim Ulemas, and they raised a storm of prejudice against him. His strength lay in his alliance with the Government. Whether the idea of this alliance had taken hold of his mind even before the Indian National Congress was founded, cannot be definitely asserted. What is certain is that after the foundation of the latter it became a definite article of his political creed. Thus the Aligarh School of Muhammadans became characteristically anti-Hindu and pro-Government.

On the other hand, the Arya Samaj activities in the Punjab brought into existence a community of Hindus who began to lay emphasis on the glories of ancient India and also on the outrages committed on Hindus and Hindu temples, etc., by Muslim rulers. These

Arya Samajists borrowed their ideas of political freedom from the writings of Thomas Paine, Joseph Mazzini, George Washington etc., They attempted to unite Hindus against non-Hindus, both Christians and Muslims. The D. A. V. College stood for Hindu unity, Hindu progress and Hindu consolidation. Thus came into existence the two classes of Hindus and Muslims who stood for sharply divided communal consciousness and communal consolidation with only this difference that while one preached the cult of political freedom, the other preached that of alliance with the ruling power. This difference became the foundation of that fire of estrangement which has since burst into flames and now threatens to reduce to ashes all hopes of a united India. The Aligarh educated Muslims on the one hand and the Arya Samajists on the other have, since then, been the doughty standard-bearers of their respective faiths.

The demand for communal representation and separate electorates on the part of the Muslims was the next natural step in their march towards exclusive communal progress. The Government, on its side found a natural and welcome ally in Sir Syed and his school of Muslims, and began to encourage their demands for special representation both in the Legislatures and the Services. The "political importance" of the Muslims also assumed the rank of a war cry. Hindus all over India resented this, but none more vehemently than those of the U. P. and the Punjab. To those who want to trace the development and growth of this idea, the early volumes of the "Comrade"[12] will furnish an interesting and illuminating study.

What was at the root of the claim about the political importance of the Muslims ? The fact that they had been the rulers of India for centuries and also the fact that there still existed several independent Muslim states outside India. It is a well-known historical fact that Sir Syed himself was opposed to the Muslims of India sending any help to the Turks in the war with Russia in 1877-78. I don't know if he was a *Pan-Islamist*. I am inclined to think that he was not. In any case, he was strongly opposed to the idea of the Indian Muslims meddling with the affairs of outside Muslim States. Indian Muslims, however, soon found out that Great Britain, like other European powers, was only as much interested in the independent Muslim states as it suited its imperial interests. Suspicions began to be entertained that perhaps the attitude of the Indian Government towards Indian Muslims was only a narcotic to prevent them from

taking any active interest in the affairs of Muslim states outside India. The alliance of the educated Muslims with the Government had its natural influence upon the masses. The classes and the masses were both permeated with the idea that the Government was their friend and anti-Hindu. There were European officials who rubbed it into their conscience as much as they could.

But the reaction was bound to come. It came in two ways. Firstly, the Muslims began to raise their demands so high that even the Government found it impossible to meet them. Secondly, the gradual fall and dismemberment of the Muslim empires of Turkey and Egypt opened the eyes of Indian Muslims as to the value of British friendship. First came the occupation of Egypt ; then came the rapid contraction of the Turkish Empire by the loss of its Christian provinces ; next came the Italian war on Tripoli which was a purely Muslim country. Finally came the war with Turkey, with the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire by the treaty of Severes. This brought about a complete change in the political views of some of the Muslim leaders and gave birth to the Non-co-operation idea. It is not implied that during all this time there were no Muslim leaders who stood for alliance with Hindus for the purposes of political freedom as against alliance with Government and consequent political dependence. It must be said to the honour of Messrs. Badruddin Tyabji, Rahmatulla and Rasul, among the dead, and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Messrs. M.A. Jinnah, Hasan Imam and Mazhar-ul-Haq, among the living, that they always stood for political unity between Hindus and Muslims.

It was left for Lord Morley, the great Liberal thinker and statesman of Great Britain, to finally sanction, at the instance of the Indian bureaucracy, the canker of communal representation with separate electorates into the Indian system[13] ; and this arrangement was subsequently sanctified by the pact of Lucknow arrived at by the Liberal leaders of both the communities.[14]

This, in brief, is the history of communal representation. I have said nothing as to its necessity or otherwise, and before I do that I want to comment briefly on the policy of the late Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, and also trace the growth of Pan-Islamism in India.

VII

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was unquestionably a great man. He was highminded, unselfish and devoted to the interests of his community. He lived and died for it. His political creed consisted of three articles :

(a) Non-interference in the affairs of outside Muslim states.

(b) Concentration of all efforts on the betterment of the Muslims' condition at home, and

(c) Alliance with the British Government.

In his eyes, these three articles were more or less interdependent.

As long as he lived he commanded the almost undivided allegiance of his educated fellow religionists, though even then a few of the latter interested themselves in the Indian National Congress. After his death[15]. there was a change. A large number of his former followers and pupils abandoned all the three articles of his faith. But an equally large number continued to believe in and follow his policy. The masses went with the former. Thus a situation arose which may be summed up in two phrases : Pan-Islamism, and hostility to the British.

Under the influence of the Non-co-operation movement a sufficiently large number of Muslims joined the Indian National Congress, but in very many cases their nationalism seemed to be only secondary to their Pan-Islamism. Now it is obvious that the Indian Muslims must sympathise with their fellow-Muslims outside. The misfortunes of the latter must draw their sympathy; their glories must fill them with elation. This is only natural. Hindus cannot realize this fully as there are virtually no Hindus outside India. While admitting this, I have no doubt in my own mind that Sir Syed's policy of concentration at home was the better of the two. The advocates of Pan-Islamism have never realized that nationalism must precede internationlism whether political or religious. People who are not free at home, cannot help others either to gain their freedom or to retain it. People who are poor, illiterate, destitute and dependent at home, cannot very well give away what they have in order to help others. The sentiment has a veneer of nobility, but it is neither practical politics nor sound economics, and in my opinion it is not good religion either. There are some people

who will laugh at these ideas, but that does not affect this truth. The events of the last three years have in my judgment conclusively shown that, at least in this respect, Sir Syed's policy was sounder than that of those who reversed it.

Note:—Compare Muslim contributions to the Khilafat and Smyrna Funds with those to the Tilak Swarajya Fund, the Malabar Relief and the Muslim Education funds etc.

The first article of an Indian's faith must be to love India above every other country on the face of the globe. Only then can he be a patriot. Divided allegiance and divided love cannot produce either good nationalists and patriots or even good religionists.

There was a time when the ablest and perhaps the most popular of Muslim poets[16] sang the two songs, one beginning with the line *Sare Jahan se accha Hindustan hamara* (of all the countries of the world, our Hindustan is the best) and the other a Mussaddas ending with the refrain : "The same is my country, the same is my country." It will be interesting to insert here a few verses from these songs showing the depth of patriotism and the height of nationalism which inspired their composer and the broad spirit of tolerance that pervaded them. The first contained the following :

> (Translation)—Religion does not teach mutual aniomsity.
> We are Indians ; our country is Hindustan.
>
> Greece, Egypt and Rome have all been effaced from the world, but our name and distinction is still living.
>
> There is some reason why our life will not be extinct, although changing time has been our enemy for centuries.

This song is often sung as a substitute tune for "Bande Mataram" and has been raised to the dignity of a national anthem.

Take the following from the other :—

> (Translation)—"The land in which Chisti delivered his message of truth, the garden in which Nanak sang the song of theism ; the land which Tartars adopted as their home ; the land which made the people of Hedjaz leave the desert of Arabia ; the same land is my native land, the same is my native land."

(2)

(The land) which aroused the wonder of the Greeks. (The land) which taught Science and Art to the whole world, etc. etc.

(3)

The place from where the world heard the song of theism ; the place from where the Prophet of Arabia received cool breezes, etc. etc.

In the foot-note it is said that the first line refers to the flute of Shri Krishna and the second is a *hadis* to the effect that the Prophet said : "he was receiving cool breezes from the direction of India."

(4)

(The land) in whose atmosphere life is life of Paradise.

(5)

(The land) which is Gautama's country, (and thus) is the holy land of the Japanese, (the land) which is a smaller Jerusalem for the lovers of Christ.

There is another song composed by the same poet under the name of the '*New Shivala*'—the temple dedicated to Shiva which is full of the noblest possible sentiments of Hindu-Muhammadan unity. I used to often recite it in my exile in the United States of America and translated it into English for an English magazine. My translation was versified by Dr. Ananda Coomarswami and published in one of the American magazines.

Equally remarkable and pathetic is a poem called *Sada-i-Dard* (a wail of pain) lamenting Hindu-Muslim disunity. Following the same line and even more pathetic and impressive is a poem called *Taswir-i-Dard* (a picture of pain). I cannot resist the temptation of giving a few verses here :

(Tr.) Oh, Hindustan, the spectacle makes me weep. Thy story is the most instructive of all stories.

The next verses bewail the fact that the writer has been assigned by fate (the duty of) being a reader of mourning literature (*Nauha khawan*) on India.

> (Tr.) Oh ! plucker of flowers (evidently referring to the foreign rulers). You have not left a trace of the leaves even. By your good luck, the gardeners are engaged in warring with each other.

(This evidently refers to Hindu Muslim quarrels). Then come the following verses :

> (Tr.) Oh, fool, think of your country ; misfortune is about to overtake it, as there are consultations in heavens to ruin it. See what is happening and what is about to happen. What is the use of repeating old stories ?
>
> Oh ! Indians, if you won't awaken in time, you will be effaced, and there will be no mention of you even in stories.

In a collection of Dr. Iqbal's Urdu poetry just published at Lahore, his poems are divided into three periods. The first ends with 1905. All the poems breathing the love of country and Hindu-Muhammadan unity belong to this period. The second ends with 1908. The third begins with 1908. It is remarkable that all the poems cited by me belong to the first period. The first and the second periods are comparatively free from sectarianism. Third period is full of sectarian religionism.

Compare these gems of Urdu literature and Indian nationalism with later songs in the days of Pan-Islamism which begin with the verse :

> (Tr.) China and Arabia is ours (and so) is India ours. We are Muslims, the whole world is our native land.

In a still later poem occurs the following :—

> (Tr.) Your hem is free from the dust of native land :
> Thou art the Joseph whom every Egypt is Canaan.

In a poem on patriotism or a love of country the poet sings of its evils and hints that the Prophet cut the roots of the tree of patriotism. This he holds, is a new fangled weapon of modern powers.

What a change ! But even more remarkable are some of the folk songs composed during the best days of the Khilafat movement which have been sung and are still being sung by the masses of Muslims in the Punjab.

Let the reader imagine what an attitude of mind must have been produced in the minds of the younger genenration of Mussalmans by writings and songs like these.

Dr. Muhammad Iqbal is no ordinary versifier. He is an accomplished scholar and a poet of the highest order who is master of several languages. His writings and poems are to be found in every educated Muslim's home, nay, even in most cultured Hindu homes too. He has, by no means, been the solitary propounder of these views. I have selected him because, being an admirer of his, I have been a constant reader of his compositions.

VIII

Add to this the *Fatwa* of the *Ulemas* that India being a "Dar-ul-Harab" (a place of war) every good Muslim ought to leave it and migrate to a Muslim country. We know by this time how the *Hijrat* movement ended ; how much money was wasted over it and how much misery was wrought thereby. The best commentary on it was witnessed by me at Constantinople.[17] On the third or fourth day of my stay there, I met two young Indian Muslims walking in the street. They accosted me first. When I asked them how they fared in Constantinople, one of them burst out almost in tears and said that if he ever returned to India, he would give out a bit of his mind to tell his Muslim countrymen how mischievous was the teaching that India was "Dar-ul-Harab" (a place of war) and how false the idea that the whole world was the home of the Muslims. That boy was one of the Mahajarins of 1921. He had travelled all over Muslim Asia from Afghanistan through Turkistan to Russia and then back to Angora and Constantinople. His experience was so bitter and his condition was so pitiable that he denounced Pan-Islamism in rather strong terms. That was what I learned from other Indian Muslims also whom I met in Turkey and Egypt, and this is natural enough. A Bengali Muslim in Egypt denounced the Khilafat movement in such strong terms that I cannot reproduce his language. Blood is thicker than water, as they say. No part of the Muslim world except Egypt is excessively rich and prosperous. Everywhere the governments have to look after their people and the latter have to eke out their means of subsistence. How can they be expected to provide for foreigners even though the latter are Muslims ? The Amir of Kabul was perfectly justified in asking the Mahajarins to leave his

country. Later on he was forced, perhaps, for diplomatic reasons, to ask some professedly anti-British Muslims to leave his territories. Similarly it is idle to expect the Turks to help the Indian Muslim *Mahajarin* when there is so much poverty in their own land.

The fact is that my visit to Turkey, Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine and Egypt, has completely disillusioned me about Pan-Islamism. I found it no where. Every country is busy with its own home problems and they are sufficiently complicated and troublesome to keep them engaged all the time. Turkey is suffering from the after-effects of a devastating war. The war has denuded the country of a great number of its male working hands and this is one of the reasons that have forced their hands to abolish the Purdah system, and trust to their womanhood to produce food for them. The problem of expatriating Christians from Turkey and receiving the Muslims in exchange from Greece is a huge problem on their hands. The problem of safeguarding against internal enemies (Greeks, Armenians and Jews, etc.) is sufficiently serious. Internal and external fears compel them to keep an efficient army equipped on up-to-date lines. All this means a great financial strain. Over and above this they are not quite united among themselves. As in other countries, so in Turkey, there are parties who think differently in politics. The abolition of the *Khilafat* and the expulsion of the *Khalifa* and other members of the royal family was a desperate step which they had to take in the interests of the present constitution. They are making a most noble effort to consolidate their power, to reform their administration and to raise their country to a first class position in the councils of Europe.

Under the circumstances even those who do not see eye to eye with Mustafa Kamal and his party in matters religious and political and who resented the abolition of the Khilafat, are opposed, out of patriotic motives to the reopening of the question, at least for some time to come. From my study of the conditions in Turkey (short and cursory as it was) I could only conclude that from first to last the Turks were intense nationalists. At the present moment their only concern is their country which they want to preserve, manage and rule in the interests of the Turks. The Turks seemed to me to be a noble people, clean in their appearance and clean in their

dealings with others. Their dress and their manner of living is almost wholly European except that the men wear the fez. About their religion, indeed, I know nothing, but any one who has his eyes open, can read the writing on the wall. There does not appear to be much of religionism in Turkey. They have abolished *Purdah.* I saw lady clerks working in the Post Office and other public offices without a veil. I saw thousands dressed in European dress with a Turkish over-mantle going about in public streets, and walking in public gardens without any veil. To me their dress seemed perfectly decent, which combined in a most appropriate manner the fashions of the East and the West.

The Turks have issued strict regulations which aim at restricting polygamy to a very large extent, if not abolishing it altogether. I saw most drastic regulations being enforced against the use of any but the Turkish language. There are also very strict rules, subject to exceptions, against enlisting non-Turks in the army. I observed no prejudice against music, either vocal or instrumental. Even dancing is indulged in higher circles. I was sorry to see rather a general use of wine.

In short I saw nothing, either in Constantinople or in other towns of Asia Minor which could show that the Turks were in any sense of the term more religious than the rest of the natives of Europe. Everywhere I saw signs of social and national distinctions and preferments. My impressions were confirmed by the Indian Muslim residents of Constantinople who met me. I was agreeably surprised to find that in the Al-azhar University the quarters reserved for the residence of Indian students were called *Rawaq-i-Hanud* (*i.e.* a Boarding-House for Hindus).

In Syria and Palestine also the problem which absorbs the Muslim community is how to regain or maintain their freedom. In Palestine the Muslims are in an overwhelming majority over the Jews. Christian Europe is creating a strong and well protected Ulster in Palestine, which leaves almost no hope of the Muslims ever regaining their lost position of supremacy. Everywhere one sees well-built and well-equipped colonies of Jews springing up with their own highly efficient educational and philanthropic institutions and with their equally efficient industrial concerns. They are fast buying lands of Muslims and Christians. Money is pouring in

from America and Europe. The only "disconcerting" feature is that it is only the poorer class of the Jews and the oppressed members of the race that are emigrating to Palestine for permanent settlement. In Syria the Christians form a very important part of the population. In neither countries is there any communal rivalry or jealousy between the Muslims and the Christians.

I am afraid Indian Muslims are more Pan-Islamic and exclusive than the Muslims of any other country on the face of the globe, and that fact alone makes the creation of a united India more difficult than would otherwise be the case. I am inclined to think that in this respect, at least, Sir Syed's policy was sounder than that of the Khilafatists. He did not believe in a religious Khilafat. He did not accept the Sultan of Turkey as a *Khalifa* and he was opposed to the Muslims of India devoting much attention to the affairs of Turkey or other Muslim countries.

IX

What I have said about Pan-Islamism and the excess of communalism among the Mussalmans, should not be understood to imply that Hindus on their side have been quite inactive and innocent. One thing, of course, is patent. Hindus cannot be anything but Indians. They have no other country and no other nation to look to. They cannot, therefore, be accused of any kind of Pan-Hinduism, in the sense in which the term is used in relation to Islam. Hinduism and Indianism are, in their case, synonymous terms.

But in their own way, Hindu revivalists have left nothing undone to create a strictly exclusive and aggressive communal feeling. Early in the eighties of the last century some of the Hindu religious leaders came to the conclusion that Hinduism was doomed unless it adopted the aggressive features of militant Islam and militant Christianity. The Arya Samaj is a kind of militant Hinduism. But the idea was by no means confined to the Arya Samaj. Swami Vivekanand and his gifted disciple Sister Nivedita[18], among others, were of the same mind. The articles which she wrote on aggressive Hinduism are the clearest evidence of that mentality.

It must be remembered in this connection that Western knowledge, Western thought and Western mentality took hold of the Hindu mind at a very early period of British rule. The Brahmo Samaj was the

first product of it. In the early sixties the Brahmo Samaj was a non-Hindu body, and under its influence Hindu scholars, thinkers and students were becoming cosmopolitans. Some became Christians, others took to atheism and became completely westernised. Thus a wave of indifferentism about Hinduism spread over the country. The Arya Samaj movement and aggressive Hinduism was a reaction against that un-Hinduism and indifferentism. Most of the early Hindu leaders of the Indian National Congress were in this sense non-Hindus. What did Mr. S. N. Banerjea or Lal Mohan Ghosh or Ananda Mohan Bose care for Hinduism ? Even Mahadev Govind Ranade was but an indifferent Hindu. G.K. Gokhale was not a Hindu at all. I will not mention other names. Thus the political nationalist movement of India was brought into existence by high-minded Englishmen, enlightened and highminded Parsees, enlightened and highminded sons of Hindus (many of whom in their own mentality were either non-Hindus or indifferent Hindus) and a few enlightened and highminded Muslims. Born under these auspices, it was bound to be a movement of pure freedom. Pure freedom makes no distinction of race or religion. As a child of the joint deliberations of Dufferin and Hume,[10] it was, however, more a "*safety-valve*" than a movement of pure freedom. It was hardly three years old when its God-father, the Marquis of Dufferin changed his mind and decided to strangle it. The best way to strangle it, he thought, was to rob it of its national character and to raise the religious and denominational bogey. The latter proved to be a Himalayan glacier, under whose weight it was bound either to perish or to be cracked so badly as to remain mangled all its life.

That Himalayan glacier was the late Sir Syed's opposition to the Congress on denominational grounds. I do not mean to say that Sir Syed's fears about his community were absolutely baseless, but the cry which he raised was practically the death-knell of Indian nationalism at the time. Sir Syed's attitude towards the Indian National Congress was influenced by the following considerations :

(a) That in India the Hindus were in a majority, and if a form of democratic Government was accepted as the political goal of India, the Muslims were bound to be in a minority.

(b) That the Hindus were both economically and educationally more advanced than the Muslims, and would monopolise much of Government influence for a long time to come.

(c) That a Hindu Raj might possibly mean the death of Islam in India, or at least a position of subservience for it.

I am inclined to think that he did not believe in the possibility of another Mussalman domination in India either with or without the help of foreign Muslim states and he, therefore, favoured the idea of perpetual British rule in this country.

The founders of the Indian National Congress, on the other hand, were absolutely honest and sincere nationalists. They did not entertain any anti-Muslim intentions, but they knew that nationalism could take no notice of denominationalism. Sir Syed's opposition, however, forced them to take some notice of it. It was by no conspiracy against the Muslims that the Hindus of that period came to occupy a large number and proportion of higher Government offices than their Muslim fellow-countrymen, and were more prominent and influential in the public life of the country. They, therefore, refused to accept communal representation in services under the Government for each community. The struggle continued for a long time, until the Congress surrendered on the first point, though still refusing to recognise the second.

From a purely communal point of view, Sir Syed was right. From a national point of view his demand was fatal. The history of the several European countries shows that they had all to face a similar situation some time or other in the process of national evolution. What helped them to become nations was a decisive refusal to give in to the claims of religion. As a fundamental principle of their policy, they recognized the supremacy of State over religion, and gradually removed all religious distinctions so far as they affected the constitution of the State including services under the State. In India we have adopted a different, in fact the opposite, course. The acceptance of the principle of communal representation was a concession to religion and is the negation of nationalism. The supremacy of religion over State has thus been enthroned. Most Muslim leaders openly say that they are Muslims first and Indians afterwards, though in 1915, Mr. Mazhar-ul-Haq[20] said from his place as President of the Muslim League that he was Indian from first to last. No one can be a true Nationalist who is not an Indian from first to last. He may be an Indian Hindu or an Indian Mussalman, but he must be an Indian all the time. A man who says he is

prepared to sacrifice the freedom of India for the freedom of "Jazirat-ul-Arab" cannot be an Indian nationalist.

Leaders on both sides are emphatic that the present tension between the two communities is political and not religious. Muslims contend that the insufficiency and the unfairness of the Lucknow Pact are responsible for it. Hindus maintain that communal representation itself is at the bottom of the present trouble. Both are right in their own way. Whether the Lucknow Pact is unjust or unfair, it is certainly responsible for the Muslim demand for its extension to local bodies, government services and the educational institutions. People outside the Punjab have no idea to what extent the principle of communal representation has been or is being pushed in the Punjab. Practically all social relations between Hindus and Muhammadans, and Sikhs and non-Sikhs have ceased. All three communities have their separate clubs, separate organizations and separate colleges. Even in sporting clubs or social functions all three communities insist on communal representation. In my judgment the trouble is both religious and political. I am certain that religion is being used for political purposes, but I am also certain that there is a certain amount of genuine religious element in it.

The very day when I wrote the above, Sir M. Hailey, Governor of the Punjab, made a speech in the Punjab Legislative Council which contained the following observations which seem to me to be an absolutely correct description of the situation :

"We have,......a problem far more difficult than those I have described, because it deals with elements less tangible and factors less susceptible of direct approach or control. We have to find some remedy for the toxin of inter-communal dissension which today is vitiating our public and perhaps our social life. Let me be somewhat more precise here and use such frankness as is possible in one whose heartfelt desire is to allay and not to provoke discord. My reference is not mainly to communal rioting or open disturbance. There has been such in the past, but the province must take credit for the fact that it has of late escaped open violence which has been exhibited in the towns of some of our neighbouring provinces. Disastrous as open disturbance may be, sinister as are its effects in prolonging the alienation of rival communities, it is not the whole of the problem, perhaps not even its gravest feature. My

reference is rather to the fact that in every sphere of life and activity, in social matters, in almost every question of administration, in the management of local affairs, in the conduct of education, even in the current discussion of questions of law and justice, the communal question intervenes."

Of course I do not admit, for a moment that the Government and its officials have been or are so innocent in the matter as Sir M. Hailey would have us believe. In my humble judgment the communal situation in the Punjab, much of it at least, is of the making of the Government. This, however, is a different matter.

X

The aggressive Hinduism preached by the Arya Samaj was not political in its conception. That it has been strengthened by political considerations cannot, however, be denied.

This is an appropriate place for examining the origin and bearings of the *Shuddhi* movement of which we have heard so much of late. The movement is as old as the Arya Samaj or even the Sikh religion. The Arya Samaj claims that the religion preached by it is universal religion, and aims at bringing the whole world under its banner. In this respect its claims are as ambitious and wide as those of Christianity and Islam. There was a time when the more orthodox section of the Arya Samaj used to proclaim from the housetops that they were non-Hindus; and that they were free to eat and drink and marry with non-Hindus; and that even Hindus should undergo a certain amount of *Shuddhi* before they could be admitted into the Arya Samaj. The other section which was believed to be more political-minded, was opposed to all these claims of the Mahatma party of which Swami Shraddhanand (then Lala Munshi Ram) was the head. *Shuddhi* with the latter was purely the ritual of conversion, i.e., admission into their Church. It had no political significance whatsoever. For a time, Lala Munshi Ram's party maintained this attitude, and some of them attempted to put into practice what they believed in theory. It was then that the now famous Dharmpal was made a hero. Soon after, however, they found that by insisting on this idea and putting it into practice they were bound to lose the practical sympathy of the Hindu community. This they could not afford to do as it was the general Hindu community that greased the various mills they

were running. So better counsels prevailed and they changed their attitude.

I know it as a fact, however, (as I was an active member of the Arya Samaj then) that serious efforts were made even then to bring the Malkana[21] and other Rajputs of the United Provinces and Rajputana into the fold of the Arya Samaj. Some were actually so brought at Aligarh and in the neighbouring districts. The Malkanas, however, did not want to be 'Aryas' ; what they desired was to be re-admitted into their own caste, and brotherhood on equal terms. To this the orthodox Rajputs would not agree. So the matter remained in suspense for a number of years, until the orthodox Rajputs consented to take them in. What was at the back of the latter's mind in this change of attitude, is also clear. It was the communal demands of the Muslim community, the policy of Mian Fazl-i-Husain and the Multan riots[22] which created the necessary atmosphere. The principle of *Shuddhi* has now been accepted by the Hindu Mahasabha, and I am free to confess that the idea at the back of this decision is partly political, partly communal and partly humanitarian, the latter element being more in evidence in the *Shuddhi* of the untouchables.

It was, it must be confessed, only natural that the Muslims should be exasperated at this change in the attitude of the orthodox Hindus, because the change opens out an entirely new chapter in Indian history. The question raised by the movement is a fundamental one and although one can understand and appreciate the Muslim point of view, one can see no way of stopping the movement as long as non-Hindu agencies are free to carry on their proselytizing work. The movement has come to stay and this fact should be philosophically accepted. That it has direct political bearings cannot be denied and the only way to minimise its importance is to do away with communal representation. For the present the decisions arrived at by the Delhi Unity Conference may be accepted as the final word in the matter[23].

At this stage we might discuss the *Sangathan* and the *Tanzim* movements too. The *Sangathan* movement also (or to call it by its proper name, the Hindu Sabha movement) represents an old idea. The object was present to the mind of the founder of the Arya Samaj. But the Samaj signally failed to realise it as it went

on developing its sectarian proclivities. I remember that when I was a student of the Lahore Government College in the early eighties, a Hindu Sabha was formed at the house of Raja Harbans Singh of Sheikhupura in Lahore. That Sabha died in its infancy. Then the movement was revived towards the end of the last century at the house of the late Lala Balmokand, Reis, Lahore. Even this organization, however, remained almost lifeless until the late R.B. Lal Chand put life into it. But somehow or other, the movement never took root. It has benefitted individual members, but it has done no good to the Hindu community as a whole. It had two formidable rivals : on the political side the Indian National Congress, on the socio-religious side, the Arya Samaj. Fixed between these two mill-stones, it was never able to lift its head sufficiently high to be a success. The present movement is a reaction of the Hindu-Muslim situation. There is nothing in its aims and objects or its constitution that need make it anti-Muslim, but to be frank, the fact that it is anti-Muslim is the only thing that keeps it alive. The Khilafat Committees which were originally established to support the Khilafat agitation have regularly and systematically carried on a religious propaganda to which is directly traceable a part, at least, of the present bitterness between Hindus and Muslims. At Cocanada, it was given out that the Khilafat Committee would be used to organise the Indian Muslims[24]. *Tanzim* is its other name. It is obviously anti-Hindu.

Personally, I would welcome both the movements, i.e., the *Sanghathan* and the *Tanzim* if they could unite all the different sections of the Hindus into one organization in one case ; and all the different sections of the Muslims, in the other, for, then it would be a comparatively easy thing for the two main organizations to come to terms with each other. But the task is hopeless. In my judgment the only purpose which the two movements are likely to serve is to increase the already existing estrangement between the two communities. The Muslim movement is also intended to keep the Pan-Islamic movement going. One cannot help noticing, and noticing with regret, that while the Muslims do not open their purses for the relief of Indian sufferers from famine, floods, earthquakes, etc., and that while very little Muslim money is spent to improve the educational and economic condition of

Indian Muslims, thousands and lakhs are sent abroad under one name or other. The phenomenon is confined to India. One finds no evidence of it in other Muslim nations like Egypt, Turkey, Morocco, Sudan, Syria, etc., etc.

As far as internal organization is concerned, both movements are bound to fail. The canker of sectarianism is as fatal in one case as in the other.

In the case of *Sanghathan*, the Arya Samaj and the Sanatan Dharam Sabha will not allow it to flourish and succeed. They do not seem prepared to transfer any of their functions or influence to the Hindu Sabha. In the case of *Tanzim* the different Muslim sects will not unite to let it be a success. Both the movements will, however, be much advertised though to keep alive anti-Muslim feeling in one case and the anti-Hindu feeling in the other.

XI

I have so far touched the past history of Hindu-Muslim relations and given a picture of how matters stand at present. I will now offer a few observations on how the present situation can be improved, in the political field.

It is suggested on behalf of Muslim leaders that—

(a) Communal representation with separate electorates in all the legislatures, local bodies, Universities and other official or semi-official bodies should be provided. Mr. M. A. Jinnah is the latest recruit to this party, and I really cannot understand how he calls himself a nationalist still.[25] The euphemism that this is only tentative and that a time will come when the Muslims will be ready to give up communal representation, should deceive no one. Once you accept communal representation with separate electorates, there is no chance of its being ever abolished, without a civil war. A civil war, will again, actually mean the supremacy of one of the communities over the other. This lends weight to the fear entertained by some Hindus that some at least, of the Muslim leaders are countirg on the help of foreign Muslim states to establish Muslim rule throughout Hindustan. Whether this fear is not well-founded, it is only natural that those who entertain it should oppose communal representation with all the strength they can command. Their opposition, however, cannot be effective

as the Government seems determined to adopt their course. Therein they see the best guarantee of the permanence of the present conditions. Communal representation with separate electorate is the most effective reply to the demand for Swaraj, and the surest way of India never getting it. I have never been able to appreciate the mentality of those who constantly talk of turning out the British and at the same time insist on communal representation with separate electorates. I really don't understand what they mean. The second is the surest way of the first being never realized. The experience of the last three years is the most conclusive proof of it. The Muslim demand strengthens the position of anti-Swarajists both among the Hindus and the Muslims, and supplies an effective reply to the contention that India is ripe for Swaraj. Communal representation by itself is a sufficiently bad principle, destructive of, and antagonistic to, the idea of a common nationhood, but separate electorates make this vicious principle immeasurably worse. If our Muslim countrymen are really earnest in their belief in nationalism and in their demand for Swaraj, the least they can do is not to insist on separate electorates.

(b) Representation in provincial legislatures and local bodies should be on the basis of population in provinces and places where the Mussalmans are in a majority. In other provinces and places they should have "effective" minority representation.

(c) Posts and offices under Government should also be distributed on the principle stated in clause (b).

(d) In the provinces where the Muslims are in a minority as well as in the All-India Departments the Muslims ought to have 25 percent. to 33 percent. of the total posts.

We will take these clauses one by one, in their serial order.

The principle of clause (a) is both theoretically and practically a negation of the united nationhood. It provides for a complete division of India, as it is, into two sections : a Muslim India and a non-Muslim India. I say deliberately non-Muslim India, because all that the Muslims are anxious for, is a guarantee of their own rights. All the other communities they lump into one as non-Muslims. Let those who demand communal representation with separate electorates in all the representative institutions of

the land, honestly confess that they do not believe in nationalism or in a united India. The two things are absolutely irreconcilable.

(b) The demand for proportionate representation in the Legislatures is perfectly reasonable provided the principle is accepted through and through. The plea for "effective" minority representation is, however, untenable. Mr. Jinnah has placed a special interpretation of his own on this term. Let us examine it in the light of facts. In Bengal and the Punjab, the Mussalmans are in a majority, and if this principle is accepted, they will rule over these Provinces. The Hindus in these Provinces according to the interpretation of Mr. Jinnah are an effective minority already ; so they are not entitled to any special representation. But what about the Sikhs ? Are they or are not entitled to special representation ? And from whose share are they to get it ? From the share of the Hindus or that of the Muslims ? Under no principle can they get it from the share of the Hindus. They must get it, if they must, from the Muslims' share on the same principle on which the Muslims themselves claim it in the U. P., or the other Provinces where they are in a minority. This will interfere with the absolute majority which Muslims demand over the Hiudus and Sikhs combined. Some Mussalmans realize this and contend that they will be content with a bare majority of one or two. But it is obvious that they cannot have every thing in their own way. Assuming, however, that they are allowed their own way, do they imagine that they will be able to make their rule effective in the Punjab ? The Punjab occupies a unique position among the Provinces of India. It is the home of a community who were the rulers of the Province when the British took possession of it. That community is virile, strong and united. Will this community readily consent to occupy the entirely subservient position which this arrangement involves ? If nothing else helps them they may oppose Swaraj as they did, not long ago. Under the circumstances I would suggest that a remedy should be sought by which the Muslims might get a decisive majority without trampling on the sensitiveness of the Hindus and the Sikhs. My suggestion is that the Punjab should be partitioned into two provinces, the Western Punjab with a large Muslim majority, to be a Muslim-governed Province ; and the Eastern Punjab, with a large Hindu-Sikhs majority, to be a non-Muslim

governed Province. I do not discuss Bengal. To me it is unimaginable that the rich and highly progressive and alive Hindus of Bengal will ever work out the Pact agreed to by Mr. Das.[26] I will make the same suggestion in their case, but if Bengal is prepared to accept Mr. Das's Pact, I have nothing to say. It is its own look-out.

Maulana Hasrat Mohani[27] has recently said that the Muslims will never agree to India's having Dominion status under the British. What they aim at are separate Muslim States in India, united with Hiudu States under a National Federal Government. He is also in favour of smaller States containing compact Hindu and Muslim populations If communal representation with separate electorates is to be the rule, then Maulana Hasrat's scheme as to smaller provinces seems to be the only workable proposition. Under my scheme the Muslims will have four Muslim States : (1) The Pathan Province or the North-West Frontier, (2) Western Punjab, (3) Sindh, and (4) Eastern Bengal. If there are compact Muslim communities in any other part of India, sufficiently large to form a Province, they should be similarly constituted. *But it should be distinctly understood that this is not a united India. It means a clear partition of India into a Muslim India and a non-Muslim India.*

(c) From a national point of view, I strongly object to any communal distinction being adopted for Government service or in the Universities. Yet it cannot be denied that Muslim dissatisfaction at the present condition of things is well-founded and genuine. Hindus must make up their mind to concede to the Muslims their fair share of the loaves and fishes obtainable from Government. They must put themselves into the position of the Muslims and see the things from their point of view. Mian Fazl-i-Husain embodies in his person a real grievance. Only he has been hopelessly wrong in his method of removing this grievance. He ought to have appreciated the Hindu point of view and proceeded in a way to make the seemingly bitter pill easily swallowable by the Hindus. The thing ought to have been done gradually. Mian Fazl-i-Husain's rule in the Punjab[28] and that of Chaudhri Shahabuddin in Lahore have given the Hindus a sample of what they are likely to have under Muslim rule. To provide them with the sample was perhaps a moving spring of Sir E. Maclagan's and Sir John

Maynard's[29] policy during the last five years. They have gained their object. But is that a fact of which Mian Fazl-i-Husain, as an Indian patriot, can be proud? If I had been in Mian Fazl-i-Husain's position, I would have tried to gain the same object in a different way and only resorted to open attacks in the last resort. What the *Muslims* of the Punjab (I say Muslims as distinguished from Muslim landlords, Muslim lawyers and Muslim graduates) stand in the greatest need of, is educational and economic openings. There are Muslim districts where illiteracy is more widespread than anywhere else in the Province. There are millions of Muslims who are exclusively at the mercy of their Muslim and Hindu landlords. What have the Muslim leaders done to improve their educational and economic position? Providing posts under the Government for a few educated Muslims is no remedy for the present condition. Safeguarding the interests of the few and neglecting the interests of the many is hardly a laudable thing, but that is exactly what Mian Fazl-i-Husain has achieved and at such tremendous cost! The Muslims all over the world have yet to learn that there are other ways of making money and thriving economically than through and by Muslim rule. Those who are doing nothing to place modern progressive ideals before the Muslims and simply emphasize ingenious dogmas, hair-splitting doctrines and reliance on Government, can hardly be called good friends of the Muslims. If the Muslims of India were to link their fate indissolubly with that of the Hindus, it would be the religious duty of the Hindus to help them towards progress in all spheres of life, but if the present communal ideals are to prevail, then they can scarcely complain of Hindu apathy towards their alleged backwardness. The present communal struggle with the atmosphere of violence and coercion that has been created throughout Upper India, can only produce a reaction in the minds of the Hindus.

XII

In the last article I observed that Mian Fazl-i-Husain embodied, in his person, a real grievance. But a grievance against whom? Certainly not against the Hindu community. If the Hindus occupy a larger number of posts under the Government than they would be entitled to on a purely numerical basis, they are not to be blamed for it. The Muslim community ought to recognise that the fault is principally their own. They did not take sufficient advantage o

the educational facilities provided by the Government in the early days of the British rule, and it is that fact which is responsible for the present condition of things. For the last fifty years the Government have been giving them special facilities for making up for lost time, with the gratifying result that they are now in a position to hold their own against every other community. They are perfectly justified in claiming that in future they should receive their due share of Government posts. But are they justified in holding that until their proper proportion has been secured to them, no one from the other community should be employed? The contention is absurd on the face of it. The claim that the number of Government posts allotted to each community should be in proportion to its strength in the population, is equally absurd. How are the figures to be made up? Is the proportion to be fixed according to the number of posts or according to the amount of salaries? Are promotions, *sub protem* appointments and retirements also to be regulated by the same standard? If so, why not say that all the Departments of the Government should be divided into "Muslim" and "Non-Muslim" sections, entirely separate and independent of one another? Even these would then have to be sub-divided into "Urban" and "Rural", and agricultural and non-agricultural. The whole thing is so ridiculous that one wonders how such a claim could be seriously put forward by men of intelligence and common-sense.

Again, are the Muslims quite sure that taking all-India figures they will gain much by these principles being enforced? On what principle will the Ministerships be divided? Is it not a fact that in some Provinces and within the Provinces in some Departments, they have got a larger number of posts than the ratio of population would justify?

I would beg of my countrymen to consider the matter in the light of practical difficulties, and then suggest a scheme by which their reasonable demands may be satisfied. I am free to confess that in the present state of communal feeling no Department should be monopolised by any one community or class. All reasonable safeguards against this contingency should be provided. Precautions must also be taken against communal intrigues or machinations. I think the appointment of a properly representative Public Services Commission will be a sufficient guarantee that no

community shall, in future, be improperly deprived of its due share of Government posts. I can think of no other solution which would meet the needs of the situation. When, however, Swarajya is attained, the solution will probably be simple. The Provincial Governments will have full powers to appoint their servants, and the Provinces having Muslim majorities will, if the present state of feelings continue, automatically have a majority of Muslim Government servants. In the All-India Services, a Services Commission will continue to make appointments.

In the meantime, may I make a respectful appeal to the Hindus not to make much fuss about Government appointments ? No community can economically prosper which relies too much on Government patronage. What percentage of the population earn their living that way ? It is true that Government servants influence communal life otherwise than through their salaries. The amount of such influences can easily be exaggerated. As long as the present conditions last, I would leave the Government free to distribute the loaves and fishes at their disposal as they choose. The cream is, in any case, reserved for Europeans ; then come Anglo-Indians ; Indians come last of all. To me this fight over crumbs seems to be the most insensible thing for any patriotic person to indulge in. Under Swarajya, the Government of every Province will determine the complexion and the character of its administrative agency. It is perfectly futile to enter into any pact about this matter now or to quarrel over it.

From Government Services we descend to Local bodies. I think the constitution of Local bodies must be settled on lines different from those of the Legislatures. The population rule will not be sound in their case. The Local bodies do not legislate. They only manage local affairs. Local affairs are local, after all, and must be managed according to the special circumstances of each locality. But if the Muslims insist on the population basis, I will let them have it that way. While they will be the gainers in some Provinces, they will be the losers in others.

As for Universities and other educational institutions, they are the last places where any communal distinction should be allowed. That will be poisoning the whole intellectual life of the

nation. I can understand and appreciate special facilities being asked for classes considered backward. Give them special scholarships, open educational centres in areas largely occupied by such classes ; even assign larger or special grants from public revenues for their benefit, without dislocating or injuring existing institutions. In this connection I will say at once that I did not like or approve of the opposition offered by some Hindu members of the Punjab Legislative Council to the opening of Intermediate Colleges at Campbellpur, Lyallpur and Gujrat. If they objected to more money being spent on Arts Colleges, the best thing for them was to suggest the transfer of one or two Colleges from the East to the West. I am afraid an analysis of the conduct of some Hindu members of the Punjab Legislative Council, both in the last Council and in the present one, will not convince any fair-minded person that the whole blame for the present communal tension in the Punjab can be laid at the door of Mian Fazl-i-Husain. The responsibility for much of what the Mian has done or is doing, rests with the bureaucratic Government. Perhaps he has been its ready and willing tool, as his own views coincided with that of the Government. Hindu critics should have seen into the game and should not have allowed themselves to be made the unconscious instruments of the bureaucracy in creating more bad blood between the communities. In any case, the future generation will not acquit them of all share in helping however unconsciously to bring about the crisis through which we are passing. In my judgment the Non-co-operation movement is also partly responsible for it. Personally, I do not care at all about posts or about admissions into the Government Arts Colleges. The case is, however, different with the Professional Colleges. In their case the allocation of numbers to different communities regardless of merit would lower the standard of education and the subsequent efficiency of the successful units. These are, however, minor matters to which undue importance should not be attached.

Now to summarise the suggestions, I have made,

(1) Free your minds from the pernicious doctrine of absolute rights.

(2) Purge your politics of "religion," (dogmatic religion).

(3) Rationalise religion as much as possible, and lay emphasis only on essentials.

(4) Remove social barriers which separate and estrange one community from another.

(5) Love India above any other country in the world, and be Indians first and last.

(6) Concentrate all efforts on improving conditions at home: That does not debar you from sympathising with your fellow-religionists abroad and helping them occasionally provided that your duty to your own countrymen permits of it. In this respect follow Turkey and Egypt.

(7) Don't fret at *Shuddhi*. It has come to stay.

(8) You can try *Sanghathan* and *Tanzim*, if you can purge them of anti-Muslim and anti-Hindu feelings, which, in my opinion, is very difficult.

(9) Have proportional representation in Legislature if you may, but do not insist on separate electorates.

(10) Divide the Punjab into two Provinces to make majority rule effective.

(11) Don't insist on population being the rule of representation in local bodies. But if you must, you may. But there, again, do not insist on separate electorates.

(12) Have Public Service Commissions to regulate the filling of Government posts on certain general broad principles.

(13) No communal representation in Universities and educational institutions. But special facilities for backward classes may be provided with special grants from public revenues for their benefit.

XIII

No Indian, who loves his country, can look upon the prevailing state of things except with the most excrutiating pain and anguish. There are men in the public life of the country, who have given their all in the hope that before they die they may see the Goddess of Liberty ruling over their beloved native land. They have put up with all kinds of humiliations, sufferings and losses, and sacrificed every comfort and convenience, and even neglected their children for

the sake of this, the one single object of their life. Absorbed in this their one passion, they have treated with supreme contempt all kinds of calumnies, libels and slanders, that have been heaped on their devoted heads by the foreign rulers of the land, and also by some among their own countrymen. They have seen their juniors rise over their heads to the highest offices under the State and to the most alluring positions in life. They have suffered insults and rebukes at the hands of men who were not even worthy of unloosening the strings of their shoes. They have been followed like criminals, imprisoned and banished like common felons, but have never lost hope.

And after all this, they are told most seriously and solemnly, both by Hindus and Mussalmans, that Hindu-Muslim unity is impossible, which means that Swaraj is impossible, or in other words, that they have been pursuing a shadow, a phantom, and living in fool's paradise and wasting their lives !

Oh ! how crushingly painful it is. Yet in the light of what is happening, how plausible and apparently unanswerable ! Amongst those who hold that unity is impossible there are men of light and leading, men of learning and scholarship, men of influence and position, even men who have a record of great service and sacrifice in fields other than political. On the other hand there are men who assure us that this is a passing phase, that Hindus and Mussalmans can be made to and will eventually forget what has happened at Multan, Saharanpur, Delhi, Allahabad, Lucknow, Shahjahanpur, Lahore, Amritsar, Amethi, Sambhal, Gulbarga and Kohat, that they will not only shake hands but embrace each other in love and fraternity, as soon as Englishmen will have left us, and that therefore, all that is wanted at present is a union which will result in the expulsion of foreigner. They do not tell us, however, how, in face of the prevailing distrust, this union is to be brought about, how the foreigner is to be expelled and lastly how the expulsion of the foreigner even if it was practicable, would, by itself, solve the problem of Hindu-Muslim differences. Is it the foreigner that loots and desecrates temples and mosques ? Is it he that kills people and burns property ? Is it his hand that strikes children and women or dishonours the latter ? No, they say the hands are those of the Indians, but the brains are of foreigners.

Assuming that to be so, how are we going to put these brains out of operation ? The reply is by conceding Muslim demands in almost every respect. Mahatmaji himself said that the average Mussalman was a bully and the average Hindu a coward, and also that cowardice was worse than death ; and yet the remedy he suggested was that Hindus must concede to the Mussalmans and other minorities all that they demanded in the political field. Applying that rule to the Punjab, the result will be Muslims 55, Sikhs 33, and non-Muslims and non-Sikhs 12. Is that the remedy ? No, say the Muslims, we do not want concessions, we want our rights ; and the rights, as they view them, are what have been stated above. Some of their spokesmen add : "If you don't do that now, you won't have Swarajya." Another says : "If you don't do that now, we shall declare *Jehad* against you, when you have got it." Nationalist Muslim leaders, men who advocate communal representation in all institutions in the land and a fixed proportion of Government services, say "Oh ! Don't listen to Ziauddins[30] and Fazl-i-Husains, they represent no body. They are in alliance with the foreigner." They forget, however, that the demands put forward by themselves are exactly the demands of Ziauddins and Fazl-i-Husains, the difference being no greater than that between tweedledum and tweedledee. The only difference is that one is called M. A. Jinnah, Esquire, and the other Dr. Ziauddin. These friends of ours forget that there are as many Ziauddins and Fazl-i-Husains among the Hindus as among the Mussalmans, and if the Hindu Nationalists had listened to them, there would have been no movement for political freedom. And without that movement there would have been no Shafis, Sarmas and Saprus in the Government of India ; nor would there have been Fazl-i-Husains and Mahmudabads in the Provincial Governments.

At least this much credit must be given to the Hindu Nationalists that their efforts have been principally instrumental in bringing the country near Swarajya than it would possibly have been otherwise. The Muslim educated community, with a few honourable exceptions, had in the past and until only a short while ago, consistently opposed these efforts. The Hindus do not want any special favours. All they ask for is justice and fairplay. If the present situation is in any way unfavourable to the Muslim community, they will be only too willing to agree to any changes which the Muslims

desire, subject only to one condition. They will not willingly and voluntarily be parties to any compromise or arrangement which will make real and lasting unity impossible. For God's sake, don't threaten us with *Jehad.* We have seen many *Jehads* ! For the last twelve hundred years we have heard that cry every day of our national existence. Yet, *Jehads* have not suceeded in killing us, and God willing, no threat of *Jehad* will influence us by one hair's breadth in our determination to continue to live. We are prepared to subordinate our communal life to national life. For united national existence, we would do anything, but we shall not submit to threats or to coercion. It is true that Muslim distrust of Hindus can successfully block the avenues of Swarajya, but brother Muslims! don't forget that active Hindu hostility may also be productive of some harm to the Islamic world. Away, then, with these threats and distrust. Let us live and struggle for freedom as brothers whose interests are one and indivisible. Let us live and die for each other, so that India may live and prosper as a Nation. India is neither Hindu nor Muslim. It is not even both. It is one. It is India.

To the Hindus, I will say, "If there are any among you who still dream of a Hindu Raj in this country ; who think they can crush the Mussalmans and be the supreme power in this land, tell them that they are fools, or to be more accurate, that they are insane, and that their insanity will ruin their Hinduism along with their country. For God's sake don't listen to them and don't be guilty of patricide. You have no one outside India to help you. You are like a lonely waif in the world and your position is extremely delicate. Be sensible and show your readiness to listen to the dictates of justice, fairplay and patriotism. Be even ready to make sacrifice if such sacrifice does not stultify you or nullify your desire for nationhood. Give up your pride and listen to reason and commonsense. That is the only way to salvation."

To leaders like Mahatma Gandhi I would say in all humility : "Sirs, do not put the cart before the horse. Do not assume the existence of conditions which do not exist. Listen to the voice of experience and caution. It is better to proceed slowly than to run away with assumptions and presumptions which would not only do no good but might land your country into pits. Do not try to change human nature simply by resolutions and exhortations. Give

it time." I am convinced that if in 1920 and 1921, Mahatma Gandhi had listened to the voice of those who had greater experience of the public life of the country, the reaction of 1923 and 1924 would not have been so terrible. The assumption that seven crores of Muslims had accepted Non-co-operation, was absolutely unwarranted. It was too much to expect educated Muslims to give up opportunities of preferment and promotion which they were just beginning to get, the Hindus being already much in advance. This was a demand which was bound to and did eventually strain their loyalty to the leaders. I don't blame them for "not listening to the latter." Let us restart our work with greater regard to the actualities of life and the possibilities of human nature, and we may yet live to see our efforts proving fruitful. Amen !

I have not said all that I wanted to say. I have deliberately kept back some important and unsavoury facts that recently came to my knowledge, in the hope that there will be no need to give publicity to them.

18. THE PRESENT POLITICAL SITUATION IN INDIA

THE POLITICAL SITUATION in India is anything but hopeful and encouraging. The present state of affairs may fitly be described as one of chaos and confusion. The people all over the country are sunk in depression. They do not know what to do and whom to follow. They do not understand on what principles and for what purposes the political parties are divided and sub-divided. There are so many parties, so many leaders and so many opinions differing from one another, as to make confusion worse confounded. To their limited political vision the situation is rather blank. The recent scenes in the Legislative Assembly,—the Independents defeating the Swarajists[1] and the latter revenging themselves on the former,—have considerably added to the existing gloom and depression. The atmosphere in the lobbies is full of recriminations and distrust. Motives and practices, not of a noble and high character, are being freely ascribed to individuals who, only a short time before, were above suspicion.

In short, everything—principles, practices, parties, and politics—seems to be in a state of disintegration and dissolution. The sturdy independence, self-reliance and self-confidence of 1921 are giving place to insidious, self-seeking, suppressed toadyism and subdued flattery, not only in the provinces but even in the centre. Frequent opportunities of meeting men in high places, at dinners, tea-parties and otherwise, are having their subtle but sure influences over different persons in different ways. In fact, the worst fears of those who were opposed to Council entry seem to be coming true. I do not say that they have actually come to be true yet, but no one

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who has eyes to see and ears to hear, can doubt that that is the direction towards which things are drifting. The bureaucracy is, of course, triumphant and jubilant. It has succeeded all along the line. Except in Bengal and C. P., it had regained full control in the provinces even last year.[2] The only place where it had so far failed to make an effective breach, was the Assembly. Now, that is an accomplished fact. In Bengal and C. P., the atmosphere is already different from what it was last year. The Gandhi-Das-Nehru Pact adopted by the Belgaum Congress[3] has not produced any appreciable results. Mahatma Gandhi's spinning franchise has not added to the strength and influence of the Congress, nor has the acceptance by the No-changers of the Swarajya Party as an integral part of the Congress, brought any tangible benefit to the latter. Nothing serious has been achieved in the line of constructive work. Everything seems to be in the melting pot.

The Reforms Enquiry Committee's Report[4] with the visit of the Viceroy to England, has also added to the uncertainty of the situation. The majority report is universally condemned and the minority report is being approved or attacked on party lines.

Under the circumstances, what should be done and how, is the question on every one's lips. This is the question to which every serious-minded patriot, be he of any shade of political opinion, should immediately address himself. A policy of drift or inaction will not do. Something definite has to be done and done very soon. The idea of sending a political deputation to England, a remedy so often tried in the past with no substantial results, is again being openly entertained and seriously discussed. Those from whom the idea has emanated do not realise that nothing will come from England, unless conditions at home are changed and changed so radically as to force attention in Great Britain.

With the Hindu and Mahomedan differences having assumed such serious dimensions, with the Independents having separated from the Swarajists in the Assembly, with the reported differences in C. P. and Bengal, with the strength that the bureaucracy has newly gained from all those circumstances and with a strong reactionary Government in power in Great Britain, what possible influence will the proposed deputation exercise on English opinion? Personally,

I believe in the necessity and advisability of having Indian agencies for the dissemination of Indian news and views in all the important political centres of the world. An agency of this kind in Great Britain is a necessity, but it would do little good if it is not supplemented elsewhere and if it does not take the shape of a permanent organization. A summer deputation making a few speeches here and there, will not serve the purpose and will not do any good worth the cost and trouble involved therein, especially in the present political atmosphere of Great Britain. The need of the moment is unity of action at home. How to bring it about and on what lines, is the question.

II

Before discussing programmes, I propose to examine the constitution and procedure of the political parties that exist in the country.

As a single party, the biggest and the most influential of them is the Swarajya party. Next in importance comes the party of Moderates or the Liberals. These two parties have fairly well defined principles and programmes. What, however, baffles one's understanding, is the constitution and the principles of the so-called Independent party. What are its principles ? What is its programme ? The very title is a misnomer. How can the 'Independents' be a party ? If they are 'Independents,' they cannot be a party. If they are a party, they cannot be 'Independents'. One can understand the existence of a Nationalist party, consisting of the various groups of those who share the desire of securing self-government for their country, even if they differ in principles and procedure, but one cannot understand how one can be 'Independent' as well as a member of a party. As a matter of fact, the Independents are those who came on a ticket of their own, without affiliating themselves to one or the other of the two well-known political parties, the Swarajya party and the Moderate party. They professed to be something between the two. Some of them are more inclined towards Swarajists than Moderates and others *vice versa.* Some do not join these parties only for personal reasons, without differing from them in principles. They are not a party who have any definitely fixed principles of their own. But the strangest part of the whole affair is that some of the Moderates or Liberals should have allowed themselves to be known as 'Independents.' The fact

is that for the purpose of united work in the Assembly, they became members of the Nationalist party, but by virtue of their differences with the Swarajists, they let themselves be grouped into what is now known as the 'Independent party'. This was rather unfortunate, as it has had the effect of practically wiping out the Liberal party from the Assembly. Instead of taking their stand as Liberals they have been posing as Independents, and what distinguishes the Swarajists from the Liberals is the former's policy of obstruction, their leaning towards or approval of direct action.

For the purposes of united action both agreed to sacrifice a bit of their principles, and formed themselves into a National group. The Liberals as a party are opposed to a policy of wholesale obstruction. But as Nationalists, they agreed to go into the same lobby with the Swarajists in order to make an effective demonstration of their supreme dissatisfaction with the existing constitution and powers of the legislature and the executive. They did not thereby become Swarajists, nor did they wholly abandon their principles. Similarly, the Swarajists, finding themselves in a minority, agreed to modify their programme a bit in order to secure the co-operation of the Independents and the Liberals. Since this coalition was brought into existence, they practically gave up their formula of 'continuous, consistent and uniform obstruction' and came as near the Liberals as was possible, consistently with their principles and mentality. Both were the gainers by this coalition. And so was the country. Politically and constitutionally, the situation in the country is worse today than it was last year. Logically, the attitude of the Nationalist party in the Assembly should have been stronger this year. But the Liberals as a party and some of the Independents have all the time been of the opinion that last year they acted wrongly in rejecting the Budget grants and throwing away the Finance Bill.[5] Others have been won over to the side of the Government by various other considerations including personal and party affiliations The conduct of the Independents this year has proved that a good many of them are really Liberals in their beliefs and procedure. If so, why then don't they join the latter and simplify matters ? Now that the coalition of the Swarajists and non-Swarajists Nationalists (that is the most intelligent definition of an Independent that we can give) has been dissolved, it will be better to revert to the old classification of the Swarajists and

Moderates. That there can be any other party between the two, is only a camouflage.

I have so far considered only those that stand for national government and are not in any shape or manner pledged to support the foreign bureaucracy. Among these latter, there may be some who do not wish to belong to any party and desire to remain above party affiliations, thus securing to themselves freedom of action in the legislature. They may have reasons of their own (reasons, neither of principles nor of programme) not to belong to any party. So far so good, but to talk of them as a party, even if there are many of them, is entirely misleading and creates a great deal of confusion. The Liberals who allow themselves to be called Independents. do a great injustice to their party. They should, in my humble judgment, either leave the party, or protest against being called anything but Liberals. The Liberals have in their ranks some of the ablest and the most patriotic of Indians. One may not agree with them in all matters, but no one can question their ability or their motives. They became unpopular because they agreed to work dyarchy and by their policy of co-operation encouraged the bureaucracy to carry out the policy of severe repression. They have now discovered that dyarchy was only a snare and is unworkable. In their ranks are men who condemn dyarchy and denounce the present bureaucratic rule as strongly as any Independent or for the matter of that any Swarajist can do or has done. They are for an immediate and substantial advance towards Dominion Government. You have a fair demonstration of their mentality in the Minority Report which has not completely satisfied the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri.[6] Is there any Independent who is prepared to go further ? If so, his place is in the Swarajya party ; if not, his place is with the Liberals, unless for reasons other than those of principle and procedure, he finds himself unable to join any party. It will facilitate eventual unity of action, if the number of parties is reduced to two. We want classification of political opinions and political procedure on well defined principles. The joining together of non-descript politicians into a party with no fixed principles and no fixed programme only creates confusion. I am inclined to think that, if the Liberals in the Assembly had maintained their party character and not joined with the Independents as they did to form a new party the deplorable scenes witnessed this last

session would have been avoided.

III

I will now examine the position and principles of the Swarajya party. The Swarajya party started with a formula of wholesale obstruction. That was the ticket on which they sought the suffrage of the electorates. They were originally pledged to non-acceptance of any office, with or without salary, elected or nominated. Their original intention was opposition to the Government where sure of success, otherwise abstention from voting. They forbade their members to accept membership of standing or select committees. When they coalesced with the Independents, they changed their tactics. The result was the practical abandonment of the formula of wholesale obstruction and instead the adoption of qualified and conditional obstruction. In August last, they drafted a new constitution which superseded the one framed in February, 1923. In this constitution, the formula of obstruction was omitted, and in its place the following was substituted :—

'That the guiding principle of the party is self-reliance in all activities which make for the healthy growth of the nation, and resistance to the bureaucracy as it impedes the nation's progress towards Swarajya.'

The programme of the party was given out to be as follows :

I. Within the legislative bodies the party shall, *whenever possible,*

(a) Refuse supplies and throw out budgets unless and until the system of government is altered in recognition of our rights, or as a matter of settlement between Parliament and the people of India ;

(b) Throw out all proposals for legislative enactments by which the bureaucracy proposes to consolidate its powers ;

(c) Move resolutions and introduce and support measures and bills which are necessary for the healthy growth of national life and the consequent displacement of the bureaucracy ;

(d) Help the constructive programme of the Indian National Congress ;

(e) Follow a definite economic policy to prevent the drain of public wealth from India by checking all activities leading to exploitation, and to advance national, economic, industrial and commercial interests of the country;

(f) Protect the rights of labour, agricultural and industrial, and adjust the relations between landlords and tenants, capitalists and workmen.

II. No member of the party shall accept any office in the gift of the Government with or without salary or other remuneration.

III. With a view to make the work of the Party effective, it shall be open to its members in the Assembly and the various Provincial Councils to seek election to every post and place in the Assembly or the Councils, and on their committees which may be open to them by election ; provided that no member shall seek election in contravention of any rules framed by the members of the party in the Assembly or any of the Councils, as the case may be.

V. Outside the Councils the party shall work for :

(a) Inter-communal unity with a view to bring about complete understanding between Hindus, Mahomedans, Sikhs, Parsees, Jews, Indian Christians (including domiciled Anglo-Indians) and all other communities living in India ; more specially the removal of the disputes and differences between Hindus and Mahomedans and Brahmans and Non-Brahmans ;

(b) Removal of untouchability and raising of the so-called depressed classes ;

(c) Village organization ;

(d) Organization of labour in the country, industrial as well as agricultural, including ryots and peasants, with a view to protect and promote its interests and enable it to take its proper place in the struggle for Swarajya ;

(e) The acquiring of the economic control of the country, including the development of commerce and industry ;

(f) The acquiring of the control of Nationalists over local and municipal affairs by contesting elections to local and municipal boards in the several provinces ;

(g) The carrying out of the constructive programme of the Congress in such manner as it thinks necessary in relation to Swadeshi, Khaddar, temperance, national education and arbitration courts ;

(h) The boycott of selected British Empire goods manufactured outside India on the advice of a committee with a view to use it as a political weapon in the pursuit of Swarajya ;

(i) The formation of a federation of Asiatic countries and nationalities with a view to secure the solidarity of Asiatic nations, including Egypt, to promote Asiatic culture and mutual help in the matter of trade and commerce ;

(j) Organization of agencies of foreign propaganda for Indian affairs with special reference to the dissemination of accurate information and the securing of the sympathy and support of foreign countries in this country's struggle for Swarajya.

I have given this programme *in extenso*, as it was necessary to do so for my argument. I have omitted article IV, as it was not necessary for that purpose. In article I, I have italicised the words 'whenever possible'. There is nothing in articles III and V to which any Liberal from the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri downwards, could not subscribe. Article II, is one which no member of the Liberal party can accept. Of article I, there is only one clause to which some members of that party may take exception. Thus, the whole difference between the actual programmes of the two parties is reduced to Article II, and in the case of some, to clause (a) of Article I. Of course there is another important factor which cannot be omitted from consideration in discussing the difference between the programmes of the two parties, i.e., the difference of mentality.

IV

I am not aware if the Swaraj party's programme has been again revised and the obstruction formula of the election manifesto restored. My comments are therefore based on the programme quoted, which was given to me by the leader of the party. Now so far as I am concerned, I am in full accord with this programme

which, in my judgment, is based on a true appreciation of the realities of the situation and is in accord with my principles. I have always been of opinion that it was wrong for the leaders of a subject people to co-operate with a foreign government to such an extent as to make it strong, effective and popular. British rule in India would be an impossibility without the co-operation of the Indians. Look at the various departments of the administration and you will at once see that administration could not be run for a day without Indian co-operation and Indian help. In one sense, it is the Indians who are ruling the country. But the guiding policy is that of the foreigner. He is the master and the Indians are merely his tools. He makes or unmakes the law ; he determines the taxes and imposes them (though they are assessed and realised by the Indians); he rules the Police and the Military department ; in fact, he does everything vital for the government of the country. But it is plain that after 175 years of British rule in India it is impossible today to enforce that principle in such a way as to make it effective. Yet, I consider that the existence of a political party in the country pledged to that principle (at least in the persons of its members) is an inspiring reminder of the true position.

Again, the experience of the last four years has made it clear that we cannot, by processes of non-co-operation 'paralyze the administration' or 'bring it to a stand-still' or 'make it impossible'. The ruling bureaucracy is too resourceful for us and we are too much disunited and divided to make any kind of non-co-operation or obstruction sufficiently effective and co-operative. As wise men who do not mean to play fast and loose with the destinies of a great nation and a great country, we must recognise our limitations and must admit that so far as 'making the Government impossible' is concerned, we have failed. Some people may retort as to why I did not see and say this in 1921 and why I threw myself heart and soul into the non-co-operation campaign. What I did actually say in this direction is known to some. I am not here to make apologies or give explanations. My business just now is to see realities and give the best advice I can give according to my lights to my people. The reality is that neither by non-co-operation nor by obstruction can we bring the Government to a stand-still. The non-co-operation campaign was based on absolutely true principles but the leaders did not correctly estimate the facts and conditions of national life. They

overestimated their powers to bring the nation back to fundamentally right position. How much they succeeded, where and how they failed, need not be discussed in this place. The fact remains that we failed in our immediate objective and the bureaucracy succeeded all along the line in non-plussing us. Now, we cannot afford to make a fetish of the principles and practices which failed to bring us success. Adjustments and readjustments according to the conditions and circumstances of the time are the very essence of politics. Yet we cannot entirely give up our principles. To do so will be carrying political opportunism to an undesirable length. Personally I do not see any thing wrong in our taking the fullest advantage of the opportunities that the prevailing system of Government and the laws afford us to improve our position and build up the nation, subject to one condition and that is that we do not let our minds be deluded and befogged by false delusions and illusions.

We must realise that if obstruction and non-co-operation is at the present moment ineffective to bring us nearer our goal, unreserved co-operation is also out of question. One outstanding fact of the situation is that the Britishers cannot and do not trust us and we cannot and do not trust them. It is not that the East and West would remain apart on account of their inherent incompatibility of temper or nature, but it is because the interest of the two are different and often clash. The Anglo-Indian bureaucracy which represents the British people, wants to perpetuate or at least to prolong its rule and strengthen the British hold on India. The Nationalists want to end or at least shorten the same and decrease as much as possible the Britishers' power of exploiting India, by virtue of their political dominance. On this point, all Indian Nationalists—Swarajists, Liberals or Independents—are of one mind. The interests of the two being in conflict from the very nature of things the two must pull in different lines wherever there is an attack by one on the other's fundamental position. This is the moral of the working of dyarchy by the Liberal leaders. There can be no true co-operation between the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy and the Indian Nationalists.

I hope all classes of Indian Nationalists realise the truth of these observations. If they do, then, is it not their duty to find out

a *via media* by which all parties may be able to unite on the immediate programme of work to be done and as far as possible, come to understanding about the methods to be followed ?

In the debate on the Finance Bill in the Legislative Assembly there was a good deal of mutual recrimination indulged in by both sides about each other's intentions and what they had done years ago. Mr. Jinnah charged Pandit Motilal Nehru with the desire of destroying the constitution and Pandit Motilal retorted by pointing out how Mr. Jinnah had supported dyarchy before the Joint Parliamentary Committee, before the Act of 1919 became law. In the same strain were couched the attacks and counter-attacks of Pandit Motilal Nehru and Babu Bipin Chandra Pal. It is not my intention to go into the propriety or impropriety of these recriminations, but I cannot help remarking that Mr. Jinnah's charge against Pandit Motilal had in principle no legs to stand upon. Refusing supplies and rejecting a Finance Bill is not destroying a constitution. It is the exercise of a power given by the constitution. The 'United' Nationalists acted quite constitutionally when last year they threw out the Finance Bill as a protest against the inadequacy of the constitution and its failure to place sufficient and effective power in the hands of the representatives of the people. That it was a perfectly constitutional thing, was admitted by Lord Olivier[7] in one of his speeches last year and I know that he made that admission with the full consent and approval of the Cabinet. Pandit Motilal's reply was in my judgment entirely sound and effective. What he said was that they were using the constitution for the purpose of mending or ending it. To try to get the constitution changed either slightly or radically, by using the constitution, cannot be said to be unconstitutional. I am of opinion that, failing uniform obstruction, a principle with which I am not in agreement, the throwing out of the Finance Bill is the one and the only way of making an effective protest which the representatives of the people can adopt against the inadequacy of the present constitution. The Liberals have not so far suggested any other method as effective as that. Mr. Jinnah's party has in principle accepted it even this year by rejecting the demand for the Viceroy's Executive Council. If that is not destroying the constitution, surely throwing out the Finance Bill either cannot be such. Both involve a strong disapproval of the present constitution. If that is destruction, then both fall in the

same category. In my opinion the demands for grants should be considered on the merits and so should the different items of the Finance Bill but the final motion for the passing of the Finance Bill should be negatived from year to year unless and until the constitution is changed and the Assembly is invested with real power over the policy of the executive. This is not obstruction but even if it be so, I won't mind it. It may be said that this is illogical. Once you pass the grants, you must logically make a provision for meeting these grants. Perhaps it is illogical. But is the present Government of India logical ? Is the rule of a handful of foreigners over 300 millions of Indians logical ? Is the power of certification vested in the Governor-General logical ? The entire constitution of the Government of India is illogical. In my judgment, the procedure is fully in accord with the spirit of the constitution such as it is. You judge the demands under both heads of Revenue and Expenditure on their merits, but show your emphatic disapproval of the present constitution which practically makes the executive omnipotent and puts it in a position to humiliate and overrule the Assembly from day to day. You thereby enable the Governor-General to take the entire responsibility of raising the revenues and carrying on the administration. I will beg of my liberal friends to reconsider their position in this respect or suggest some other way of recording our protest as effectively as this. Your resolutions and paper protests create no impression either in the British Isles or in the rest of the world. But the throwing out of the Finance Bill from year to year is bound to be echoed throughout the civilised world. This is the least you can do. I am afraid the Independents have this year completely undone what they did last year and have thereby stultified themselves and brought humiliation on their country. This is not the time for a weak and vacillating policy. By all means settle any policy you think most effective, but stick to it unless circumstances force you to change your tactics. There was no such change in the political situation this year which could justify the change in the attitude of the Independents towards the Finance Bill. If anything at all, their attitude ought to have been even stronger.

V

Within the last twenty-five years never before was the political situation so muddled and complicated as now, nor was there greater disunion among political leaders than what is observed today. No

one can claim a monopoly of political wisdom ; but, in my judgment, the situation has been made worse by a policy of drift on the part of the leaders. So far as one could judge from what has taken place at Delhi during the last session of the Legislative Assembly, one can say that Nationalism and Communalism have been working at cross purposes. There was nothing to be wondered at in that fact as it had been made pretty clear by Mahomedan leaders during the conversations that took place at the Unity Conference[8] meeting that they were negotiating with Government. What has surprised me is that the Nationalist leaders—both Swarajists and Liberals—should have walked into the trap laid for them by Muslim leaders. I wonder how many of them realised that the attitude of some of the Independents in connection with the Finance Bill was due to a bargain that had been made with the Government by some for personal reasons and by others for communal reasons. I have a suspicion in my mind that the announcement made by the Government of India, first, in the Council of State and later, in the Legislative Assembly, about reserving one-third of the services for minorities, was a part of this bargain.[9] If so, all that happened in the Legislative Assembly is perfectly intelligible. The Hindu Nationalists have now to make up their minds as to the line of policy they should follow in the future. It is not a question of driving the Mahomedans into the arms of the Government as some Mahomedan leaders are apt to point out to the Hindus as a result of the latter's refusal to concede the demands of the former. On the contrary, it is a case of the Government throwing itself into the arms of Muslim leaders to make the Swarajist policy innocuous. While they have failed in Bengal by their own stupidity, they have succeeded very well in Delhi. The Bengal blunder was perhaps due to no fault of theirs. It might have been dictated from Whitehall. The Hindu Nationalists, even if they were to concede the maximum demands of the Mahomedans, could at any time be easily outwitted by the Government. One of the Mahomedan leaders has already expressed the opinion that he did not expect any appreciable advance towards Swaraj for the next forty years, and that no pact that might be entered into for the purposes of the next advance would be final. Under the circumstances I, for one, do not see how the Hindu Nationalists could enter into any pact with the Muslims with a view to accelerate the advent of Swaraj. Consequently, the first thing that the Hindu Nationalists have to decide

is how far they should go in face of this attitude of the Muslims. I have, no doubt, that the Muslims also want Swaraj as keenly as the Hindus ; only, they are not prepared to sacrifice an iota of their communal interests for the purposes of Swaraj. On the other hand, there are Hindu leaders who want Swaraj *at any cost* ; but there are others who do not want to proceed so fast, as the price that they are asked to pay for Swaraj will make that Swaraj worthless from the national point of view. In the light of these observations, it seems to me very clear that no party of Hindu Nationalists can make their policy of obstruction effective. An ineffective policy of obstruction is no good. In fact, it is harmful. Those Nationalists who are harping on pure obstruction every time they stand up in the Legislative Assembly to make a speech, are doing positive incalculable harm to the country as well as to their community.

Under the circumstances, I am very strongly of opinion that in the best interests of the country and the cause of Swaraj, Swarajists and Liberals should join hands in formulating their minimum demand, which is, autonomy in the provinces subject to the control of the Central Government in certain matters, and subordination of the Executive to the Legislature in certain departments of the Central Government. The manifesto issued in Great Britain by the group of Liberal politicians who visited England last year[10] and the Minority Report of the Reforms Enquiry Committee can certainly form a fairly good basis for negotiations between the Swarajists and the Liberals. Once a minimum demand is formulated by the joint efforts of these two parties, they could easily come to an understanding as to the methods to be followed to make that demand accepted by the Government in India as well as in England. It is obvious that two things are required to achieve that end—negotiations and pressure. No amount of ordinary agitation could produce that pressure which will make any negotiations in that line fruitful. The pressure must, to a certain extent, be so compelling as to make the bureaucracy adopt a reasonable attitude in the negotiations. Violence and force must be ruled out and so must uniform obstruction. In fact, the word 'obstruction' itself must be deleted out of the National programme. Every question must be judged on its merits ; opposition to be resorted to where it is necessary. Personally I am wedded to no formula and would be glad to accept any programme which could be formulated by the joint deliberations of the two principal political parties in the country.

I would beg of my Swarajist and Liberal friends to weigh the situation very carefully and to bring about joint deliberations as early as possible. I do not believe any deputation to England at the present time would be of much value for the purpose of bringing pressure upon the British Government in England to yield to our demands, though it is quite a different matter to send a few propagandists to counteract the mischief which is being done by the one-sided activities of the henchmen of Anglo-India. What is of the greatest importance is the creation of a hopeful atmosphere at home and the drawing up of a programme which would appeal to the people as practicable.

I am afraid, there are too many Independents in the country to be of any effective use for political purposes. Their refusal to join either of the two principal political parties does not appear to be very sound except perhaps on personal grounds. I think the electorates in the next elections will have to make up their minds to choose their candidates from the two political parties and to reduce the number of Independents to the lowest figure. The Independents cannot form a party. They are being used by ambitious people for various ends and it is extremely unfortunate that they hold the key position in the Central Legislature. I am confident that a good many of them could be won over and brought into the fold of one of the two principal parties.

Before concluding I want to say once more that my mind is quite open on the Hindu-Mahomedan question. Any solution effective for national purposes and safeguarding against the danger of dividing the provinces on the basis of Hindu and Mahomedan majorities will appeal to me. But from a close study of the mentality of the Muslim leaders, I am afraid, they are determined to have their own way. In that case, I will rather let them negotiate with the Government than agree to propositions which to me seem fatal to the very purpose for which an understanding is desired.

There is another phase of the question to which I would like to draw the attention of all national leaders. It is clear to me that the only political party in Great Britain, which is likely to be of some help to us in our progress towards Swaraj, is the Labour Party. The Liberal Party is in this respect worse than the Tories and, moreover, it need not be counted upon as having any influence worth the name

in Parliament. The only party which can deliver the goods safely and surely, if once we enter into an agreement with it, is the Conservative party. An agreement with the Conservatives as to the terms on which they will allow us the management of our internal affairs would be worthwhile, even though we may have to sacrifice some vital points in order to arrive at that agreement. Failing that, as I have said before, the Labour Party is the only group of British politicians with whom we should negotiate. It is true that they failed us last year when they were in office. It is also true that they are responsible for the policy of repression now being followed in Bengal and the Punjab. Yet, in spite of all this, they are the only party in which we have true and trustworthy friends. I am afraid, the attitude of the Indian Nationalist Party towards Indian labour is not likely to help in the retaining of that friendship. It will be impossible for any Indian nationalist to adopt a policy such as might be fatal to the development of Indian industries. For some time to come, it is in the best interests of India that nationalists should strive after a solution of labour problems such as would not be inimical to the development of Indian industries ; yet an out and out partiality for capitalists is not the right thing to be done. Indian labour must be helped to a position of safety and security. Its present organisations are much below the mark and it behoves the Indian nationalists to support labour in establishing its position and securing its fundamental rights, which can only be done by the help of Indian Legislature.

I have striven my best to write without prejudice and bias. I belong to no party and am desirous of bringing about such an agreement between the different political parties as might change the present political atmosphere into one of hope and confidence. But, if, in making these observations, I have made any mistake, I am open to correction.

19. MY POLITICAL CREED

SPEAKING IN THE first person singular, about one's own self is never a very pleasant thing to do. It sometimes savours of vanity and self-advertisement. But there are occasions when every responsible public man has to do so, in the interest of the work he is engaged in, and also in the interest of the cause he professes to love and serve. I consider the present to be one of those occasions so far as I am concerned, and I therefore crave the indulgence of my readers and friends for a brief statement in relation to certain leaders and certain public questions. It is well that I should make this statement once for all, in as clear a language as is possible, so as to leave no room for misapprehension or misunderstanding on the part of those who are not actuated by any personal or other motive to misrepresent me.

My relations with Mahatma Gandhi are of the most cordial and pleasant nature. We differ very widely in principles and programmes, and even more so in temperament and behaviour. He is an ideal friend. He has written to assure me that he considers me to be "one of his dearest friends" and that since he "discovered me at Nagpur" he has had no occasion to change his opinion of me. I am sure if I have misread his letter he will correct me. My attitude towards him is one of unbounded love, admiration and respect. He and Malaviyaji are for me the two greatest personalities in the country. I differ from both not only in temperament but also in principles and programmes. Yet I love and respect them both as I love no other public man or men in the whole of India. My differences with them are quite sharp and not being possessed of their sweetness, forbearance and patience, I am sometimes blunt and outspoken with them both in public and in private. But the idea of displacing them

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in the leadership of the country can never enter my brain. In spite of all my love and admiration for them I consider them to be only fallible human beings who are not free from blame or error. In my judgment they do at times commit blunders. And if I am anywhere near them I do not hesitate to tell them so, or to send them a message to that effect. What to some may appear "insolence", "impertinence" or "impudence", seems to me to be a clear duty and an act of the greatest friendship. I do not care what other people think or say, so long as the sweetness and forbearance of these friends allows me to do my duty in my own imperfect and at times rude way. They know my motives and understand me as perhaps no one else. I am content with that.

II

As regards my political creed (involving principles and practices) I am what I have always been. I started my public life with certain principles and certain articles of faith. My education at school and at college was very poor. Since then I have studied much, I have thought much, I have learnt much and I have seen a great deal, but my fundamental principles and beliefs remain unaltered. They may briefly and categorically be stated in a few sentences :

(a) In their dealings with other nations, nations are never benevolent or just. Individuals may at times be, but nations never are. It is self-interest and self-interest alone that guides them in all international transactions. Some nations have, through their national spokesmen, propounded contrary notions, but in actual dealings they have almost always failed to act up to them. Even the abolition of human slavery was not undertaken in a spirit of pure humanity. Individuals were inspired by the purest of motives but the nations were not. Nations only recognize the law of necessity and they never forego any power, either political or economic, unless they are compelled to do so by circumstances or by the law of their own good. The British nation is no exception to this rule and those who appeal to the benevolence or sense of justice or fairness of the English, in international matters, only plough the sands.

(b) Foreign rule is, under any circumstances, a curse ; chaos, disorder, mutual slaughter, anything is preferable to that, But when

once a foreign rule has been established you cannot overthrow it by hysteria, melodrama or sentiment. A small homogeneous nation living in a limited area and having common ties of religion, language and culture can more easily overthrow such rule than a big heterogeneous nation with all the differences of religion, language and sentiment dividing section from section and keeping them aloof. The statement that India is not a nation, is neither true nor false. It depends on how and from what point of view you look at it. Modern history, and the conditions prevailing in a large number of modern nations have demolished all the old theories of nationhood. A common nationhood now a days transcends the differences of religion, language and culture. India is a nation and could easily become an effective nation if we could find a remedy for the clash of creeds that prevents its full realisation of nationhood. That is the problem of India. And that problem will not be solved by a hysterical display of unity, by an artificial pact, or by our simply dismissing it from the vision of our mind. It requires a prolonged propaganda, a patient waiting and a lengthy process of eliminating the difficulties in its way. Insistence on religion, religious forms and religious formulae, by every community and faith, and recognition of religious differences in the field of politics, are hardly the correct way of reaching the ideal. I have discussed the matter in another place and need not repeat here what I have said there in this connection. But what I must repeat even if I have to repeat it a hundred times a day, is that the problem that faces us is not how to turn out the British, but how to bring about an understanding between the different religions so as to ensure the possibility of one national will in the political field. I do not believe in a unity based on a common hatred, but even if that be accepted as practical politics, it does not free us from the probability of another foreign rule immediately or soon after we have got rid of the present one. But to expect emancipation on the basis of promoting and perpetuating religious differences by a system of communal representation all along the political field, is simply unthinkable. That means perpetual bondage and a never-ending civil war. A *decisive* civil war is also unthinkable but one carried on under the aegis or the protecting wing of a foreign master makes the situation almost hopeless. The introduction of religion in any shape or manner in the Non-co-operation programme was in my judgment a great blunder.

(c) I have no faith in non-violence as a creed, but I accept it as a policy, the best under the circumstances.

(d) Non-co-operation with the foreign rulers is the only right course for a subject people. It is based on truth and logic and sense, but non-co-operation on a rigid programme for such a big nation with so much heterogeneity was doomed to failure. I never changed the opinion I expressed in my concluding address at the Special Congress session of 1920. But I joined the movement with a sincere faith in its educating value and gave my best to it without committing myself personally to matters which I considered impracticable. Last year when I sailed for my trip to Europe, I intended to use my stay in Switzerland in writing out a brief history of the Non-co-operation movement. I actually wrote five chapters of it, but I have deliberately refrained from publishing them in their present incomplete and imperfect form. The truth about my share in the Non-co-operation movement (for which I accept my full share of responsibility) will be known when that history is published with documents supporting the facts stated therein. In the meantime I repeat what I said on being released from jail in August 1923, that I have nothing to explain, nothing to withdraw and nothing to apologise for. We committed blunders ; we have suffered for them ; all the same the country has profitted from them immensely. Our Moderate friends have no reason to taunt us for our failure as their own co-operation was as dismal a failure, if not even a greater one, as our non-co-operation proved to be. Non-co operation came within an ace of success, but co-operation never had a chance. What is needed now, is the chalking out of a middle course. We are wedded neither to co-operation nor to non-co-operation. We must do what is best, practical and possible under the circumstances. For that we require vigorous thinking, thorough discussion, honest consultation among all parties and a determination to do what is decided upon.

I hope I have made my position clear.

20. PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS AT THE BOMBAY HINDU CONFERENCE

THE AIMS AND OBJECTS of the Hindu Sabha movement have been explained by me at great length in the various speeches and statements to the Press I have made since my assumption of the office of the President of the Hindu Mahasabha.[1] But a large number of persons still choose to be ignorant of them. Under the circumstances it will do no harm if I re-state them once more before this gathering, the first of its kind in the Western Presidency. The constitution of the Sabha states its aims and objects in article 5 which I reproduce *in extenso* for facility of reference :

"The objects of the Sabha are the following :

(a) To promote greater union and solidarity among all sections of the Hindu community and to unite them more closely as parts of one organic whole.

(b) To promote good feelings between the Hindus and other communities in India and to act in a friendly way with them, with a view to evolve a united and self-governing Indian Nation.

(c) To ameliorate and improve the condition of all classes of the Hindu community, including the so-called low-castes.

(d) To protect and promote Hindu interests, whenever and wherever necessary.

(e) Generally to take steps for promoting the religious, moral, educational, social, economic and political interests of the entire community.

Note : *The Mahasabha shall not side or identify itself or interfere with or oppose any particular sect or sects of the Hindu community*

Full text of Lala Lajpat Rai's address delivered on 5 December 1925 at the Provincial Hindu Conference held at Bombay.

or any political party, nor shall it interfere with the personal convictions of any body."

In explaining the a-ticle, I may be permitted to state that the Sabha aims at creating a spirit of unity between the different sections of the Hindu society, without any ulterior design against any other community or class of persons outside that society. Ours is a unifying and integrating function and in no way a disuniting and disintegrating one. The Hindu community is the largest and the biggest in the country that goes by one name. Outside India the word "Hindu" stands for "Indian." It may be a surprise to you to learn that even in Egypt a pre-eminently Muslim country, in the compound of the greatest Muslim University (that of Al-Azhar) in the world, Indian Muslims are called Hindus, and the quarter reserved for their residence is known as the Hindu section of their Boarding House. In America, both North and South, all Indians are called and described as Hindus. This would have been an ideal condition of things if the non-Hindu inhabitants of this country had adopted that name without giving up an iota of their respective religious faiths or departing in any way from their religious practices. The name of the country is Hindustan and all those who accept it as their home ought to be called or known as Hindus. But we know that is not so. There are large groups of humanity having their homes in this country who resent being called Hindus, and in its efforts to keep up these differences, the Government of the country has gone even so far as to divide the people of the country for all legislative and administrative purposes into Muslims and non-Muslims. The division, if any, should have been, into Hindus and non-Hindus. But the request for separate recognition having emanated from the Muslims, the Government adopted the present nomenclature, which threatens to become permanent. Some Hindus resent it, but I do not object to it as to me it signifies that except for the Muslims, the whole of political India is one and united. Recent developments, however, indicate that a time may come when every other community known by a separate distinctive name, may get special representation with separate electorates and the Hindus may be the only people in India left to be known as non-Muslims. It looks ridiculous, but nothing is ridiculous which has the approval and the sanction of the gods that be.

This is, however, by the way, though it emphasises the necessity

of the Hindus doing something to counteract this mischievous tendency and keeping together under one designation all those who take pride in Hindu culture and are not ashamed of acknowledging their Hindu origin. Active efforts are being made by Government and non-Government agencies to divide the Hindus and split them into smaller groups so as to reduce their strength, their importance, and their influence. Unfortunately the prevailing social system of the Hindus lends support to these efforts. The existing caste distinctions are the weakest spot in the Hindu system and if the Hindu community and Hindu culture have to outlive these ridiculous and mischievous attacks, it is incumbent on the Hindus to take active steps to repel the attacks and to resist the attempts that are being made to destroy their unity and their communal existence. Religion, in all countries, does impose a certain type of communal existence and create artificial barriers to free inter-course between man and man. I have found such distinctions even in the freest country in the world. In the United States there is a thick wall that separates the Jews and the Christians. In fact the division is not between the Jews and the Christians but between Jews and non-Jews. Nor is the distinction of the making of the Jews alone. There are Jewish hotels where non-Jews are not admitted, and there are non-Jewish hotels where Jews and blackmen are not admitted. The Government of the country, however, recognises no such distinctions and a time is sure to come when these distinctions will altogether disappear even from the social field. This might have been the case in India as well, if the Government had not intervened and created communal compartments for political purposes and out of political motives. Religious sentiment and religious bias is no doubt very strong in the world but so also are political and economic forces. Where the latter are converted into aids to the former there a state of things is produced which makes any eventual obliteration of communal distinction impossible. Personally I would like my country to recognise no communal distinction in the political and the economic fields. In fact I would go farther and recognise no communal distinction even in social life. I would like to see people professing different faiths intermingle in social life absolutely freely. But under the existing conditions that is not to be. Insistence on communal distinctions by one community followed by Government recognition of its separate political existence as a necessary element

of political life, reacts on peoples of other faiths and leaves them no alternative but to organise themselves communally, if they do not desire to be eventually merged in the former.

It must be recognised that separate communal existence for political purposes intensifies religious and communal differences. Under such a system the communal ego of such a community becomes intense while that of the others becomes loose, so much so that in the course of time the latter are eaten up and devoured by the former. That is the condition of things that now faces us in India. Islam has a distinctive individuality of its own not only as a religious but also as a political and social system. The best interests of the Indian body-politic require that while it may retain the former, it should let the latter go. The same may be said of the Hindus. The meeting together of the two on the same political and economic platform would in that case have led to the evolution of such a socio-political system as would retain the best features of both without destroying their religious individualities. But communal distinctions on political lines are calculated to produce exactly the contrary effect. The question then resolves itself into this. The Muslims are determined to preserve and perpetuate not only their religious but also their political system as far as it may be possible for them to do so. They are not prepared to merge their separate entity into a body-politic which might be a composite entity composed of all the religious communities that claim India as their home. They insist on communal representation all along the political line and also on organising their separate communal entity so completely as to become the dominating communal entity in India. This is bound to come about if other communities refuse to organise themselves. Their refusal or neglect to do so means acquiescence in a condition of things which must sooner or later end in their merging in or subordination to the other community. Organization means power, influence and prestige. Those who neglect to organise must give way to the organised. The power of the British lies in their organising capacity. Their numbers are small but their organising capacity is great. Similarly if the Muslims organise as Muslims and Hindus refuse or neglect to organise, the consequences are plain. The question of the desirability or otherwise of such consequences is not relevant. The fact remains that the bulk of the Hindus do not desire them, and for

good reasons. I will say nothing about the Christians and the Parsees. Under the circumstances it becomes absolutely essential for the Hindus to organise themselves in order to avert those consequences. If organising for that purpose is anti-Muslim or anti-national, then I frankly confess that the Hindu Sabha movement is both. But I don't admit that such an organization is either anti-Muslim or anti-national. The desire for separate political existence and the move to secure that end has come from the Muslims. The Hindus are whole-heartedly opposed to that policy and are prepared to merge their separate communal entity into a common Indian nation. But they form the majority and the Muslims are afraid of not receiving justice at their hands without the necessary guarantees for the protection and safeguarding of their communal or minority interests. These they believe can only be secured by communal electorates and by communal representation even in the services and on the local bodies. But this plea can only hold good if it be conceded that Hindus and Muslims have separate political and economic interests. So far as religious freedom is concerned one can appreciate the fear but it may be safeguarded by the constitution. But so far as secular interests are considered, why should any one claim any such rights as a Muslim or as a Hindu if the idea be to evolve a common nationhood ? The whole idea of the existence of such separate interests is a negation of nationhood and it must be frankly confessed that those who desire a perpetuation of religious-communal distinctions in the secular line must be considered to be opposed to nationalism. New York is the biggest Jewish city in the world and even there the Jews are in a minority as against the Christians, yet they have never put forward a claim for communal representation. The same may be said of the coloured people of the U.S.A. who socially form an entirely separate community with whom the white have hardly any social relations at all. The population of the United States is a pclyglot population consisting of the British, the Germans, the Italians, the French, the Russians, the Spanish, the Arabs, etc. It is a standing complaint of American publicists that these groups keep up their separate communal existence for several generations but no one has ever asked for communal representation. In fact of all great countries the idea is singular to India. Its acceptance is entirely due to the desire of the foreign rulers to perpetuate our differences and thus make impossible the evolution of a common nationality. The

plea that it is a temporary phase and will cease after some time is untenable on the face of it, as experience has now abundantly proved that the principle is one which tends to perpetuate itself when put into practice even for a short time. I have already remarked that it is a principle of such a kind that if you concede it in favour of one community you cannot deny it in the case of others. I hope I have made it sufficiently clear that circumstances have made it absolutely essential for the Hindus to organise themselves so as to reduce the amount of mischief which the separate organisation of one community politically, religiously, and socially, in spite of the non-organisation of other communities is bound to produce.

Communal organization has thus been thrust upon us. At the same time it is our bounden duty to be perpetually vigilant so as to avoid its degeneration into a communal war. One way of doing it is to create a new bond of alliance between communities that are opposed to communal representation in the political field. As a Hindu I consider it my duty to take all measures that will effectively prevent a Hindu's conversion to any other religion, be it Islam or Christianity ; subject to that qualification, I see no reason why there should not be the freest social intercourse between the different religious communities, so as to remove, or at least reduce effectively, the acerbities which are a necessary consequence of political communal representation. Inter-dining and inter-marriage between different religious communities is interdicted by Hindu customs. It is not always allowed even between different castes and sub-castes. It is thus out of the question to expect Hindus to inter-dine and inter-marry with Muslims and Christians. Inter-marriage between Hindus and Muslims is not recognised even by Islamic Law, as at present understood and interpreted by Maulvies. According to the latter the moment a married Hindu, man or woman, is converted to Islam, the marriage tie is dissolved, but that is not so if he or she becomes a Christian. Thus while a marriage tie between a Christian and a Hindu is legally possible, it is not possible between a Hindu and a Muslim. In the former case the parties to the marriage can retain their respective faiths, but in the latter both must become either Muslims or Hindus. I am mentioning this in order to show that in this respect there is a greater possibility of a freer social intercourse between the Hindus and the Christians than between the former and the Muslims. The Indian Christians have

declared against communal representation (some have recently pronounced in favour of it) in the political field though they are also organising their community for non-political purposes. Here the Hindus and the Christians are on common ground and nearer to each other than Hindus and Muslims. More or less the same may be said of the Parsees. The two cultures (Hindu and Parsee) have much more in common than any other two cultures in the world. Several of their religious customs and ceremonies seem to be closely allied to each other, such as *Homa* and *Yajnopavit*. Be that as it may, I would beg of the Hindus, Christians and Parsees to keep together as far as may be possible, so as to fight out the disease of communal representation in the political field successfully. This perhaps is more easily said than done, in face of the numerous divisions in the Hindu society itself. The infection is spreading and in the West and the South there is a regular war between the Brahmans and the Non-Brahmans. The Non-Brahmans have formed themselves into a separate community. But this is an arrangement which lacks the elements of permanence. If the Hindus were to organise themselves on a broad basis, the distinction between Brahmans and Non-Brahmans is bound to disappear. Hinduism is sufficiently broad-based to include and tolerate all differences of faith, culture, custom, and caste within its fold. In Upper India, the Hindus are not divided into Brahmans and Non-Brahmans. The bureaucracy tried to create that division but their efforts have not been successful. They are now trying to create a division between Jats and Non-Jats, but there again if the Hindu community behaves wisely and tactfully, the division will be averted. A fresh division is now being attempted between the caste-Hindus and the untouchables, but that is an all-India question, and I will come to it presently. My point is that an organisation of the Hindus, as such, is necessary to counteract the evil effects of communal representation in the political field which is insisted upon by our Muslim countrymen ; secondly, that the Hindus must cultivate more friendly relations with the Christians and the Parsees ; and thirdly, that they should do every thing possible to avert political divisions among the different sections of their community. I will now take up this last question.

Hindus are divided into castes and sub-castes. Hindu Shastras recognise no such distinction as between Brahmans and Non-Brahmans. In North India we know of no such distinction. In the

South and the West the distinction has come into existence because of the original *Varna* system not having been enforced here. In the North there is very little difference between the Brahmans and the other *Dwijas*. All the *Dwijas* whether Brahmans or Non-Brahmans, are entitled to wear the *Yajnopavita*, perform *Yajnas*, and study the Vedas. All of them are entitled to the *Gayatri*. The functions of the priesthood are no doubt confined to the Brahmans and they alone can cook food for all. Beyond this, there are hardly any other distinctions. In the South and the West, however, *Yajnopavita* and *Gayatri* and the Vedas are denied to all Non-Brahmans. We have sufficient evidence in Hindu Shastras and Hindu history that in ancient times the caste distinctions were not so rigid as they are today. Intercourse between castes was fairly common. A Brahman was sometimes degraded to the position of a Shudra and a Shudra had opportunities to rise to Brahmanhood. Any way, there is no authority for *Yajnopavita* and *Gayatri* being denied to those who are entitled to the position of *Dwijas* under the Shastras. There is also abundant authority for the proposition that those who became *Antyajas* by ceasing to wear *Yajnopavita* and preform *Yajnas*, were re-admitted to these rights by the performance of the necessary *prayashchit*. Under the circumstances, it is easy for the Hindus of the South and the West to fall back on the ancient custom, and admit at least those Non-Brahmans who are *Dwijas* by occupation as laid down in the Dharma Shastras and other ancient books on Hindu Law and ritual, to the rights of *Yajnopavita* and *Yajnas*. The Brahmans of the South and the West can thus destroy the movement for the separate political existence of the Non-Brahmans by broadening the basis of their Brahmanism and admitting into its fold all those Non-Brahmans who are not doing the work of the Shudras. Brahmanism will thus become synonymous with Hinduism. I am certain the movement for separation is exploited by a few educated men. The Non-Brahman shopkeeper, cultivator, craftsman, etc., have no interest in it. If the Brahmans of the South were to concede to them the rights of *Dwijas* which are theirs under the Hindu Shastras, their separatist tendencies will disappear. It is in the best interests of Hinduism as well as nationalism that this should happen and I beg to implore the Brahmans of the Western and Southern Presidencies to lose no time in coming to an understanding with the Non-Brahmans. I am not afraid of the latter, even if they continue to receive the favoured treatment they are now

getting from the Government, because I am certain that ultimately they cannot go adrift from the Hindu Samaj, but the sooner the division is healed up the better.

Now I come to the Shudras and the untouchables. The case of the untouchables is clear enough so far as untouchability is concerned. On no account and for no consideration can untouchability be allowed to disfigure the fair face of Hinduism. Once untouchability is removed, the present-day untouchables become one with the Shudras. We have a clear authority in the code of Manu that a nation which has a majority of Shudras as against the *Dwijas*, is doomed. We have abundant authority for the proposition, as already remarked, that caste in ancient times was not so rigid and so permanent as it is now. Shudras were allowed by proved fitness to rise to higher castes and people in the latter were degraded to the position of Shudras by reason of misconduct. The present-day caste system is not an ancient system. All sensible and intelligent Hindus are agreed that the prevailing system of numerous castes and sub-castes cannot be defended. It requires substantial changes. Time and circumstances are against it. However wrathful the *Varna-Ashram Sanghis*[2] may be against the reforms, they are destroying the existing caste system inch by inch by their own conduct. Theirs is a dying cause, for the simple reason that the time forces are against it. Let us first take the *Varna* system. It is clear that the present numerous divisions have no justification in the ancient Hindu Shastras which divided society into four *Varnas*. The present system must then be a development of later days, and is thus open to change according to the needs of the time. The advocates of *Varna-Ashramas* themselves do not fully observe either the rules of ancient *Varnas* or the customary restrictions of the present *Varnas*. The customary practices are opposed both in spirit and in letter to the ancient system, but the actual conduct of the orthodox today is opposed even to the sanctioned customary practices of 100 years ago. There are many among the so-called orthodox who have no objection to the use of European medicine, or aerated waters, or pipe-water, or articles of food manufactured in Europe and America. Some of them dine at the Government House or in the company of the Europeans and also preside at *Sanatan Dharma Sammelans* (conferences). They go to Europe and do not perform any *prayashchit* (expiation ceremony) on their return. This is particularly true of the

ruling Princes. How can they then advocate the maintenance of the caste system in its present shape? Their own conduct belies their professions of faith.

Let us next take the *Ashramas*. Here again, their conduct and practice is entirely opposed to the spirit and the letter of the *Ashrama-Dharma*. The rules as to *Ashrama-Dharma* do not contemplate early marriage, at least among the *Dwijas*. The present-day Hindus have cut the root of the *Ashrama-Dharma* by the institution of child-marriage. How many of them retire to the forests or become Sanyasis as required by the *Ashrama-Dharma*? For people who marry their children at the age of twelve or under, who do not teach the latter even rudiments of Sanskrit, who send them to schools managed by non-Hindus, who stick to *Grihastha* life after sixty, nay some of whom even re-marry at that age, to call themselves defenders and champions of the *Varna-Asharam-Dharma* is mere mockery worthy of the Pharisees. The best thing for us is to deliberately change our social Code, and for that there is ample authority and provision in the ancient scriptures. Samaj Dharma is always regulated by *Desh* and *Kal* (i.e. place and time). The Hindus have, from time to time, changed it, according to their altered needs and circumstances; and this has given them stability and permanence. Life implies adaptability and growth. Hinduism is a living organism, has always been so. Its social Code, has been changing, is changing, and will continue to change according to the needs of *Desh* and *Kal*. The opposition of the orthodox is good so for as it militates against too rapid a change and too outlandish a transformation, but it is harmful and injurious when it threatens to thwart all progress and militates against the regeneration of life according to the needs of the time. I appeal to my orthodox countrymen to take note of the mighty changes that have been introduced into our lives by circumstances over which we had no control. Railways, steamships, airships, post offices, water works, electricity, all these and many other modern inventions have produced a new world. We cannot ignore them. We are allowing ourselves the full use of them. So far we are changing with the times, but we object to certain other changes which are a necessary corollary of these. In this we are doomed to failure. Failure in this direction involves waste of time and money, which again means slowness of progress and loss of opportunities. Let

us then take note of the necessary implications of the altered state of things and readjust our lives accordingly. Therein lies safety, statesmanship, foresight, wisdom and solidarity. Diehard conventionalism only means more and more waste, and also useless struggle and strife. If we are wise, we shall avoid it. If not, time will take its own revenge.

There is another danger which threatens the Hindu community and against which I wish to sound a note of warning. Orthodoxy is being used for political ends. There are forces at work which invite and encourage the orthodox people to oppose the nationalist Hindus on the ground that the latter are not orthodox and therefore do not truly represent the Hindu community. It is argued that the Hindu community being, in the main, followers of the Sanatan Dharma, the Sanatan Dharmis alone can represent the community in the councils of the nation. An appeal is being made to the prejudices of the orthodox against those who are social reformers. There are men among the Sanatan Dharmis who are among the truest and the most advanced nationalists of their time. The late Lokmanya was one of them. Pandit Malaviya is another. There are hundreds and thousands who belong to the same category. An insidious attempt is being made to poison the minds of the masses by denouncing these people even in private meetings (sometimes in public too), as hidden social reformers. No educated Hindu possessed of a feeling heart and love for his community, can help being a social reformer. Social reform on an extensive scale is the greatest need of the community, and no political advance of a substantial nature can be secured without it. Does any one really believe that a community wedded to child marriage and *Chhût Chhat*, with a passive outlook on life and a psychology of negation and *tyag* (renunciation) can secure that efficiency which is the *sine qua non* of respectable communal or national existence in these days. If the Hindu community does not wish to commit a political *hari-kari*, they must move every nerve to be communally efficient and united. To divide itself into religious sections with separate political ambitions, is the greatest folly of which a community can be guilty. Political work must be done by people who have at least a working knowledge of politics and also political experience at their back. The cry of 'religion in danger' is the most mischievous of all the cries that could be raised either

by professed nationalists or by communalists. The fear that the demand of communal representation was likely to filter down to religious sects and castes, is a real fear. It behoves the leaders to nip it in the bud. They should not be afraid of becoming unpopular or of losing influence with certain sections of their own community. Just as we are facing unpopularity by making a stand for Hindu Sanghathan, in the same way we should be prepared to face odium from those classes who want to divide the Hindu community into so many political compartments. We know that the attempt is being made by persons who have no political knowledge or experience or who have no political services at their back. These persons are appealing to the orthodox masses to send them to the Councils to save their religion. Some of these persons are men who are either closely associated with the officials, who have always been at their beck and call, or who want such association in order to strengthen their claims to official forums. It will be a misfortune if the machinery of the Hindu Sabha is captured by such people to be used for their own selfish ends. It will be equally unfortunate if a further split in the Hindu community is brought about by the efforts of these seekers after Council seats. I have so far deliberately set my face against this insidious attempt. But the purpose underlying it is now being sought to be gained by insidious opposition to the Hindu Sabha and an artificial bolstering up of the cry of 'religion in danger.' To me Sanatan Dharma means all that is good and noble and pure, but I have no faith in the popular Sanatan Dharma which seeks to preserve untouchability, to perpetuate untenable caste distinctions, to keep women ignorant and in bondage, and to keep the Hindu community eternally inefficient. Nor have I any faith in the attempts at religious purifications which are being made by foul-mouthed fanatics. There is a reason for every thing and this is not the time to rake up doctrinal controversies.

The greatest need of the community is to take the best care it can of the mothers of the community. To a Hindu, a woman is *Lakshmi*, *Saraswati* and *Shakti*, combined. That means that she is the foundation of all that is beautiful and desirable and leads to power. And very deservedly too. The mothers of the race are its makers and unless their condition is healthy, the race cannot be expected to be anything better. When we say healthy, we include in it all that makes life enjoyable, progressive and potent.

The efficiency and prosperity of a social or political unit must eventually be a reflex of the efficiency and prosperity of its women. The Hindus of today are inefficient, lacking in courage, lacking in enterprise, lacking in the zest for life, lacking in enthusiasm, lacking in solidarity, scattered units of a once great race because the condition of their women is not what may be called healthy. The great feature of present-day Hindu life is passivity. "Let it be so," sums up all their psychology, individual and social. Active effort to change the conditions of life, to change the current of their tendencies, to be masters of their fate, to grapple with difficulties that hamper their progress and solidarity, is wanting. They have got into the habit of taking things lying down. They have imbibed this tendency and this psychology and this habit from their mothers. It seems as if it was in their blood. There is no question that all this has to be changed if the Hindus are to become efficient, enterprising and courageous. The best, the easiest and the most effective way is to attend to our girls. Our women labour under many handicaps. It is not only ignorance and superstition that corrode their intelligence, but even physically they are a poor race. Their physical disabilities are generally due to the social restrictions from which they suffer. They become mothers at an age, at which girls in other countries are at school, developing their muscles and nerves, hands and feet by suitable physical exercises. The first delivery is the death of a good number of them, and disables many more. They become a kind of invalids for the rest of their lives. Those who breed, breed too many, and thus lead miserable, wretched lives from which all zest and enthusiasm disappears. As a rule, they are careless about their food. Their chief concern is to feed their men well. For themselves they can live and subsist on anything. The Hindus are an awfully careless people in the matter of their food. The rich eat too much and the poor too little. The middle class does not exist. In middle class and poor families, the women are all day long engaged in cooking food. Both men and women are supremely ignorant about the food value of the things they eat and drink. As for regularity of meals, no one understands the value thereof. Women get very little open air and almost no exercise. How on earth is the race then to improve and become efficient? A large number of our women develop consumption and die at an early age. Such of them as are mothers, infect

their children also. Segregation of cases affected by tuberculosis is almost impossible. Mothers won't leave the children alone. They must have them by their side.

Then the condition of the child-widows is indescribable. God may bless those who are opposed to their remarriage but their superstition introduces so many abuses and brings about so much moral and physical misery as to cripple the society as a whole and handicap it in the struggle for life.

The hardships from which our women suffer, react most injuriously on the condition of men too. We put up with all kinds of tyranny and impudence from others, because we are in the habit of making others put up with such things at our hands. Our women are extremely shy and dependent. Modesty is a great virtue, but not so helplessness and dependence. I want the Hindu woman to retain her modesty, her selflessness, her devotion to duty towards her children and her man, but at the same time I want her to learn a bit of self-assertiveness. People who lack in that quality can never be free. They are always looking to others for protection. It is not praiseworthy to be offensive and aggressive, but it does not pay to be always on the defensive. There are occasions in life when one has to take the offensive if one wants to save one's life and liberty. Offensiveness in such a condition is really another name for self-preservation. The ancient history of the Hindus proves that in ancient times, Hindu women were more independent, more assertive, more self-reliant and physically more competent than they are now. They were as free as men, and their children were brave, kind, self-confident and able bodied. If the Hindus want to get out of the slump in which they find themselves at present, they must attend to and improve their women.

A craze has set in for University diplomas and degrees. These examinations are a great curse. Yet the best among our educated people are mad after examinations. I place no limitations on women's right to knowledge and scholarship but diplomas and degrees do not necessarily produce these results. Woman is the goddess of home, but she is also the presiding genius of social life. To educate her is pre-eminently desirable but that kind of doubtful education that is a passport for diplomas and degrees is not only not necessary for her, but is even undesirable. The present system of education is a great drain even on boys' health. Much

more must it be so in the case of girls. But our people are crazy after degrees. The first two words of the English alphabet have a charm for them which they can't disregard. Oh ! how fallen and how helpless we are ! We cannot even give suitable education to our girls because we cannot start and maintain good and well-equipped institutions of our own for their education. If we could establish and maintain national Vidya Pithas for our girls we would bestow a real boon on the nation. I will beg of my countrymen to *save* their girls, to give them suitable opportunities for developing healthy bodies, and psychologically fit minds. Our girls and women must be freed from all superstitions which breed carelessness in life, indifference to food, distaste for struggle, lack of energy, the habit of taking things lying down and a psychology of dependence and fear. Let me not be misunderstood. There is nothing so hateful as a quarrelsome, unnecessarily assertive, impudent, ill-mannered woman but even if that were the only road which the Hindu woman must traverse in order to be an efficient, courageous, independent and physically fit mother, I would prefer it to the existing state of things. In concluding this part of my address, I will say to my countrymen, "Your women are your makers, save them and educate them."

Friends, I think I have already taken too much of your time. I will briefly put in a categorical form, the chief points I have sought to press on your attention in this address :

(1) The need of and justification for the Hindu Sanghathan.

(2) The need of restoring the ancient spirit of *Varna-Ashrama* system with change dictated by modern conditions of life.

(3) Opening the life of *Dwijas* to the Non-Brahmans.

(4) The immediate removal of untouchability and the uplift of the Sudras.

(5) Immediate improvement in the conditions of Hindu women and provision for their education.

(6) Taking necessary steps to prevent the division of the Hindu community into different political compartments.

21. A PLEA FOR RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS

I RISE TO give my support to this Resolution as I believe there is no other Member in this House who is more qualified by personal experience to speak on the subject than I am. Practically, all the three clauses have applied to me at some stage or other of my life. In 1907 I was deported under Regulation III of 1818.[1] In 1921 I was convicted of a crime which the Government of India afterwards declared was not a crime. In 1921 I was again convicted of a crime which the Government Advocate said had not been proved.[2] When I wanted to return from America I was treated as an exile by the refusal of a passport.[3] Practically all these three clauses have in one way or another applied to me at different stages of my life. Let me take them *seriatim*. First, I will take my deportation under Regulation III of 1818. I was deported under suspicion which was absolutely without foundation. My Honourable friend, the Home Member, only a short time ago, asked Mr. Goswami to take his statement that there was no conspiracy between the European society of Calcutta and the Government in drafting or passing the

Full text of Lala Lajpat Rai's speech in the Central Legislative Assembly on 26 January 1926 on the Resolution regarding release of political prisoners, moved by Maulvi Mohammad Shafee. The Resolution read :

This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council that he be pleased :

(a) to order unconditional release of all such convicted or under trial political prisoners in Indian Jails as have not been held guilty or charged with any act of violence and all political detenus whose trial in a Court of Law is not contemplated ;

(b) to order the release of all other political prisoners convicted or under trial, provided that a committee consisting of two members elected by the Legislative Assembly and two members nominated by the Government recommend their release ; and

(c) to allow the return to their homes of all Indian exiles in foreign countries who are supposed to have been concerned in revolutionary movements in order to secure freedom for India on such reasonable and honourable terms as the government may think fit to impose.

(*Continued next page*)

Ordinance. I want him to take my statement that the suspicion in 1907 of my having tampered with the Army was absolutely groundless. There was absolutely no basis for it. I can understand that Government, believing in the reports of secret agents, thought that there was danger in my being allowed to remain free. I can quite understand that. But after all, Governments and Courts are not infallible and the vagaries which are often committed in the name of Government can better be remedied by an occasional revision of such cases which may take place from time to time. Any decisions which the Government might arrive at as to guilt, even though those decisions might be confirmed by the finding of High Court Judges who have not taken the defence of the men whom they are charging, can be groundless and wrong. About the treatment of political prisoners under Regulation III or 1818, I do not want to say much, but I want to say this that it is not the actual lack of comforts or lack of conveniences that matters so much as the insolence and practically the impudence of those jailors who are put in charge of these men. I was a personal witness to such insolence and impudence in my case. Men who have been honourable in their lives, who have enjoyed some social status in life, who believe that they have done certain things in the performance of their duty to their country—they may have been wrong—are entitled at least to that much respect which their sincerity demands and the purity of their motives is entitled to. Therefore,

The original Resolution was substituted by the following amendment moved by T.C. Gosamwi :

That this assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council that he be pleased :

(a) forthwith to secure the immediate release of all political prisoners detained without trial ;

(b) to take steps to remove all difficulties in the way of the return to India of all Indian exiles in foreign countries who may or may have been suspected of being concerned in any revolutionary or other activities regarded by Government as prejudicial to the interests of India ;

(c) to bring to trial under the ordinary law of the land such persons against whom the government think that they have sufficient evidence to go to court.

The motion of Mr. Goswami was adopted by the Assembly by 53 to 45 votes.

when you put them in charge of persons who not only refuse to them the ordinary comforts of life according to their status in life, but treat them with insolence and impudence, you are practically creating the atmosphere for a revolutionary movement. I have only that much to say so far as my personal case is concerned.

Now, we have heard a lot about revolutionary movements. To me most of this talk seems to be absolutely beside the point. Revolutions and revolutionary movements are only natural. There are many people to whom the word "revolution" is like a red rag to the bull. I want to make it clear that there can be no progress in the world without revolutions and revolutionary movements. There are of course differences between the two, but, on the whole, this talk about the distinction between revolution and evolution is to my mind a silly talk. There is no evolution without revolution and no revolution without evolution. The two things are interdependent. The question is one of pace. It is only on this basis that sometimes a distinction can be made between the stages of evolution and the stages of revolution. Any other distinction is absolutely unreal. Now, Sir, I want to point out that revolutionary movements have always existed in this world in the past. They exist in the world today and they will continue to exist in the world hereafter. One of my friends pointed out, and I wish to repeat that statement, that there is no country on the face of the earth at the present moment, however civilised, however well-governed it may be, which is free from revolutionary movements. Even Great Britian is not, and therefore the existence of the revolutionary movement does not necessarily imply that the people of that country, where the revolutionary movement exists, are so perverse and so absurd that they ought to be penalised—the whole of them or a large section of them—for the existence of a revolutionary movement in that country. Of course as I say, the nature of a revolutionary movement depends upon the means which that movement adopts to gain its objects and to achieve its aims. Here again there is nothing in the nature of the people of India which makes them distinguishable from the people of other countries. I have had the privilege of living in Great Britain and other Western countries and I do not see any reason why the people of this country should be considered to be more excitable and more inflammable than the people of other countries. In fact the complaint was that there were very few such people in this

country. I do say that the people of India are by nature, by tradition, by their culture and by their history, so docile and so manageable and so easily subject to law that they ought to be given the credit for it instead of being discredited on that account. The existence of a revolutionary movement among them shows that there is something radically wrong in the system of Government which forces the people to have recourse to revolutionary methods in order to redress their grievances or to assert their rights. Now, Sir, on that point again we have for the last five years tried to create an atmosphere of non-violence in this country. There again I am perfectly certain that our non-violence may proceed from conviction or may not proceed from conviction, but it was certainly our definite opinion that, under the present circumstances of this country any revolutionary movement depending upon force was not desirable but on the contrary definitely harmful. We have repeated this statement from hundreds of platforms. Yet, in spite of Government's trying to crush movement of violence, it has gone on in this country in some form or another for the last twenty-five years and it has not been exterminated. I say that no amount of rigour in the application of the law and no amount of rigour in the treatment of the prisoners will exterminate that revolutionary movement unless the causes which are at the bottom of that movement are removed and remedied. That must be understood distinctly. It may be that there is a temporary lull. My friend the Honourable the Home Member in dealing with the Bengal Case pointed out that the Bengal Ordinance[4] has been so effective that since its passing there has been no outrage. If so, for that reason alone the prisoners should under the Ordinance be immediately released. If that Ordinance has done its work and has been so effective that there has been no further outrage, then that is the most cogent reason for taking immediate action to release all those detenus who are detained under that Ordinance. But I may tell my Honourable friend that that should not give him any idea that revolutionary movements in this country will cease to exist or will be exterminated unless the real causes at the bottom of these revolutionary movements are removed. The main cause is that the people of this country are being denied their political rights from day to day, from month to month and from year to year. I must seek your permission to say that the battle for freedom is of course always

going on in the world in some form or other. There will be no progress unless people are prepared to suffer. I can quite understand Government taking an opposite view. My friend just now read out the definition of political offences. I could also read the definition of political offences from other Encyclopaedias which would show distinctly that in a political offence intent is of the greatest possible importance, at least in judging the nature of the offence, the punishment to be given to the political offender and the treatment to be accorded to him. These three things are essentials involved in any political case ; not only the technical offence but also the punishment he has to receive and the treatment he has to receive after conviction. I could cite many other authorities if I were minded to do so affirming the contrary of what my friend has cited,[5] that is that intent is of very great importance in a political crime. The fact is this that there is a clear distinction between countries which follow the British system and those which follow the Russian or the Austrian system. What we are asking the present Government to do is that, as they are Britishers they should follow the British system and the British tradition of freedom and not the Austrian or old Czarist system. I want to point out the difference. The wording of the law and the technicalities may be similar but the application of the law in England and in India is very different. I do not think anybody can contend that England is free from revolutionary movements. At the present moment there is a revolutionary movement going on in England, but do the Government treat those engaged in the revolutionary movement exactly in the same way as they do the people here ? Certainly not. There is a great deal of difference, because public opinion in that country will not stand what we in this country are standing. They are a free people. Even those people who do not agree with the revolutionaries and their views stand up in defence of liberty, of freedom of expression whenever any demand is made to suppress that freedom of expression. At the present moment the Labour Party which has no sympathy with Communists or with persons carrying on communistic propaganda (when an attempt was made to arrest the Communist leaders), tried its best to protest against such action by Government, and they assert that the public opinion of the country is with them, and I believe that to be true, because if there is one thing prominent in the British character it is the love of freedom of

opinion and expression. Of course when it comes to freedom of action, that might be regulated by the laws and, therefore, Government might have to take some proceedings when it comes to action. But so far as freedom of expression, of sentiment, of opinion, is concerned, that is a principle which every Englishman drinks with his mother's milk ; and therefore the British people are naturally opposed to the suppression of such freedom in their own country. But when they go abroad perhaps they find that Empires cannot be maintained on British traditions, and therefore for the maintenance of those Empires they have recourse to methods which are not British in character. What we are asking them is this, that if they are really appreciative of our connection with the British Empire, if they are really earnest in their demands for co-operation from us in the system of Government that prevails now, the test of that lies in carrying out the principles of British justice in the treatment of political offenders in this country. I think, therefore, it is in the fitness of things that every time the Government or the representatives of the Government ask us to make a generous response to a generous call for co-operation, a Resolution of this character ought to be brought forward in this Assembly to point out to the Government the difficulties which prevent us from extending the hand of co-operation. The facts relied on in this Resolution are of the nature of a skeleton in the cupboard and they require exhibition whenever there is a talk of unreserved co-operation. So long as our people are treated practically like dogs because they have had no trial, so long as important men, men of education and culture like Subhas Chandra Bose,[6] are being treated in that way, Government cannot expect the Nationalist Party in this country to co-operate with them unreservedly. We are earnest, we are indulging in no camouflage when we say that we do not desire in this [country] a revolutionary movement based on force. We do want an atmosphere in which it may be possible for us to co-operate with the Government to a greater extent than we have done in the past; but for the creation of that atmosphere it is absolutely necessary that the treatment of political prisoners or the treatment of political offences must differ from what it has been in the past. It must change materially and vitally. Unless it changes, I submit—of course I ascribe no motives—that all this talk of co-operation is mere diplomacy, and not a matter of real earnestness. We want a proof

of the sincerity of the intentions of the Government by their acceding to our request in regard to these political prisoners and with regard to these exiles. I can understand that the Government may not be able to accept the Resolution in its entirety. They may not be able to release all the political prisoners, but surely here is an opportunity which is offered to Government to show a real change of heart by acting as much in consultation with the representatives of public opinion as it is possible for them to do. I submit, Sir, that these people who have been detained without trial, who have been imprisoned without a charge, should be either immediately released or put upon their trial. This practice of issuing *lettres de cachet* is so un-British, that in this 20th century for any Government to justify this procedure, amounts to a confession that in spite of British rule for 150 or 200 years we have made no progress at all towards real freedom or towards a better understanding of human nature. I want to make it clear, Sir, that we are not pleading for mercy. We want no clemency, and we do not want any amnesty. We are by this Resolution pointing out to Government that here is an opportunity for them to show their sincerity. We are making our wishes known to the Government, and we are at the same time saying that here is a way for Government to give the easiest proof of their intention, of the sincerity of their call for co-operation from us. I want to make it definitely understood that we shall be insulting and dishonouring those people who are suffering for the sake of their conscience and are, as they think, doing their duty in jails or in those comfortable quarters which the Home Member would have us believe the prison cells are. We shall be insulting them if we ask for any mercy or clemency or amnesty on their behalf. We do not want any of these things. We are simply putting forward this Resolution in order to make our wishes and the wishes of this House known to the Government in the hope that the Government will consider them as the wishes of the representatives of the people. You have granted a certain constitution to this country of which you are proud. Under that constitution you have appointed certain constituencies. Those constituencies have elected us, and we, as the representatives of these constituencies which you admit are the best material at the present moment to reflect the sentiment of the country, express our opinion and we ask you to act up to it. That is practically the reason, that is the mentality with which we have presented this Resolution and

under which we are supporting this Resolution.

Now, Sir, I come to the second part of the Resolution which deals with persons convicted by judicial courts. Here again we do not want to sit in revision over judicial courts at all. That is not our wish. But, as I have pointed out already, in my own case the District Magistrate, the law officers of the Government and the Government themselves were of opinion that the meeting of the Provincial Congress Committee of the Punjab was a seditious meeting.[7] They declared it such and asked us to disperse. We refused and we were prosecuted. The result was that the whole of that conviction had to be set aside because the law officers of the Government of India declared that the interpretation of the law made by the Punjab Government was entirely wrong. But this Government which want to follow British traditions had had absolutely no word of regret to say to those persons of respectable position who had suffered in prison for an offence which did not exist, and which they had not committed. They have not anywhere expressed their regret for that error of judgment. It was an error of judgment which involved people in disgrace, in discomfort and in expense and loss to a very great extent; yet the Government had not a single word of regret for it. We are in this country unfortunately getting very much accustomed to such errors of judgment. We want the Government to understand that we are no longer children. Perhaps we were not children at any stage but we heretofore had no voice to speak out. We have got that voice now and so long as we have got that voice we shall speak out and nobody can stop us from speaking out. We are now asserting that, if this Government continue to commit violence in that way by these errors of judgment, then of course they can only expect the younger people of this country to resort to revolutionary measures. The Government cannot come back to us and say that these people are adopting revolutionary measures and therefore they have to be shut up in jails for their life. When will the Government be convinced that the atmosphere has changed? I should like to say one word more on the question of amnesty. I decline to believe that amnesties are granted out of mercy. Amnesties are always granted for political considerations. When the Government believe that it is in their interest to create a better atmosphere, and to win over people, they grant an amnesty. When they see that the people are so dead that

they cannot bring any pressure to bear on the Government and cannot make it unpleasant for them they do not grant any amnesty. So, amnesties are not granted out of mercy or out of considerations of clemency, but they are really granted on political considerations. No Government can really afford to exercise mercy. Governments are not for the purpose of exercising mercy. They act in their own interests and on considerations of political expediency. So, Sir, in the case of judicial convictions also we ask for no revision of these convictions. We ask for no revision of the sentence as well. We simply say that there have been cases in times of excitement and strife like the martial law administration of the Punjab or the non-co-operation or the Akali movements when certain judgments were passed in a hurry. Certain sentences might have been considered advisable in that atmosphere and at that time, and we say the time has come when Government out of considerations of political expediency might reconsider those sentences and release those prisoners. That is all what is meant by the second part of the Resolution. We cast no aspersions either on the judiciary or the executive. We want to leave it only to an independent committee which may have two representatives of Government and two representatives of this Assembly to consider the appropriateness of keeping those people in jail any longer.

Now I come to the third point. My friend the Honourable the Home Member said that under the law as it stands there are no exiles. True the law does not recognise any exiles in this country except those transported for life, but there are methods and methods of making people exiles. For example, if you refuse a passport to a man who is in Switzerland or who is in Turkey or who is in America or who is in Germany, you practically convert him into an exile without passing the sentence of transportation on him. I think there will be some sense in allowing these people to come here and afterwards putting them on their trial. But when you make it absolutely impossible for them to come by refusing them passports and then get up and say there are no political exiles so far as the law of India is concerned, then I think you are not putting the situation fairly.

Now in my case I would point out that I was not expelled by this Government, but when my passport was refused and I could

not come back to India, I had to go into exile. I met two young men in Constantinople, two Muhammadan boys, not more than 20 or 21 years of age, who went out of this country in the time of the Hijrat Movement.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: Boys of 50 did you say ?

Lala Lajpat Rai: Boys of 20 or 21. I call them boys because they were so young. I met them in Constantinople and they complained to me that they were in very great distress in that country because they could not find any employment and had no means of livelihood. I advised them to apply for passports. They applied to the Consul-General there but the passports were not granted. I asked one of them to give me his application and I submitted it to the Labour Secretary of State.[8] From that time, about a year ago, nothing has been heard by that man or by me about his case.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: May I ask the Honourable Member one question ? If he will bring that case to my notice I will have it inquired into.

Lala Lajpat Rai: Thank you. I was just giving that as an illustration. I will not take long. There are other cases also but I will not now refer to them. There are Indians in Japan, in Germany, in America and in other countries who are in very great distress. Of course, there may be some whom the Government do not want here, others perhaps less offensive, others not offensive at all. If they ask for passports it is only fair that passports should be given to them even on the understanding that Government do not give them any guarantee that they will not be prosecuted. I submit, Sir, that sometimes young men are carried away by a sense of duty, or by an exaggerated sense of the righteousness of their cause, and they do things of which they afterwards repent. They ought to be given a chance of restarting life and making their existence as passable as they can. Their relatives here are wanting them and are suffering from their absence and they themselves are suffering. Some are prepared to take the risk of trial. Why not give them the chance of coming here and having their fate decided by the Courts ? Perhaps Government may decide not to prosecute

them as they did not in the case in Bengal, of a Bengali who returned recently from Germany. At any rate these exiles should be treated much more leniently in the matter of passports than they are now. I have much more to say, Sir, but as my time is up I will not detain the House any longer.

22. THE PROBLEM OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN INDIA

THERE SEEMS to be a considerable amount of feelling in the House that the inquiry demanded by the original Resolution is too limited in scope. At the same time there is a feeling that the two inquiries, one into the unemployment problem in general and the other into unemployment among the educated classes of India, can be better made by two separate Committees. In order to achieve both these objects, I propose, with your permission, to move an amendment which will include both objects and which, I think should satisfy both sections of the House.

Mr. President : The Chair will consider the question after hearing the amendment.

Lala Lajpat Rai : This is my amendment, Sir.

"This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council that he may be pleased to appoint a Committee with a non-official majority to investigate into the problem of unemployment in general, and among the educated classes in particular, and devise suitable remedies whether by a system of industrial and technical education, or by a revision of the existing system of education, or by

Full text of the speech delivered by Lala Lajpat Rai in the Central Legislative Assembly on 28 January 1926 on the Resolution on the problem of unemployment among the middle classes in India moved by A. Rangaswami Iyengar. The Resolution read:

"This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council that he may be pleased to appoint a Committee having a non-official majority to investigate into the problem of unemployment among the middle classes and suggest remedies for the same."

The original resolution was substituted by an amendment moved by Lajpat Rai and accepted by the Assembly by 48 to 46 votes.

offering encouragement to the starting of new industries, or by opening new avenues of employment, or by the establishment of employment bureaus, or by all these or any other means ; and that the said Committee do make a report on the latter problem as early as possible."

Mr. President : Does the Honourable Member wish to speak ?

Lala Lajpat Rai : Yes, if the amendment is allowed ; otherwise I shall speak on Resolution.

Mr. President : Do Government wish to say anything in the matter ?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra[1] : I have no objection to that amendment, Sir.

Lala Lajpat Rai : Thank you. Now, Sir, coming to the general question, I think this amendment is desirable from another point of view, and that is this, that the line of demarcation between the poor and the middle classes is very thin. In this country it is very difficult to distinguish between these two classes. Some people are of opinion that there are no middle classes in this country ; there are either rich men or poor men, and, therefore, the restriction of this Resolution to middle classes practically deprives this Committee of the chance of making an inquiry into the question of unemployment among the poorer classes. I have, therefore, considered it fit, with your permission to propose this amendment which includes both the questions. Of course, it will be open to this Committee to divide itself into sub-committees, one to make inquiries into the unemployment problem in general and the other to devote its attention to the question of unemployment among the educated classes. In this amendment we say that the latter problem should engage their attention immediately and they should make a report on the problem of the educated classes as early as possible, because, after all, even the general prosperity of the country will depend upon the kind of education that is imparted in our schools and colleges, and on that again will depend the quality and quantity of both skilled and unskilled labour as well as other things which are of equal importance to the country in general and to the educated classes in particular. That is all that I have to say on the general question.

Before dealing with the specific question of the unemployment

of the educated classes I want to make a few remarks about the bearing of the political question on this problem. It was said on this side of the House that foreign domination had a great deal to do with the economic poverty of the country, and the remark was laughed at from the other Benches. I want to repeat that remark, Sir. I think that foreign domination makes our economic position in this country if not hopeless, at least extremely difficult. At every step we meet with difficulties in solving our problems. I am not raising the general question of political freedom here, but I want to make it very clear to all concerned, that the solution of the political question will greatly help not only the solution of this particular question of unemployment, but of various other questions affecting the economic prosperity of India and Indians. The two questions are really very much interdependent upon each other. It is of the greatest possible importance that the political question should be solved as soon as possible, because, I believe, the economic problem can be effectively solved by nobody else but those people whom the shoe pinches, and who are directly interested in the economic salvation of the country. The officials, who belong to a foreign Government, have to give weight to too many considerations besides the interests of India when dealing with the economic problem. They have got to consider the interests of the Empire, they have to consider the vested interests of certain classes of their own countrymen, and they have also to consider the interests of British trade. All these considerations deeply affect the economic problems of this country. The problem of unemployment is one of them and to a great extent depends on the general economic position. All these questions have a direct bearing on the political problem, as well as on the economic problem. It is not therefore a matter for laughter at all. It is a serious question. On the solution of the political problem depends eventually the economic salvation of the country. After all, it is for bread and butter, for an easy or at least a comfortable and decent life, that people are fighting. There are, of course, questions of sentiment and honour also involved in the political problem, but the most vital question is the question of bread and butter and a comfortable life, and that question cannot be successfully tackled without the solution of the political problem. The two questions are, as I have already remarked, interdependent.

Now, Sir, the question of unemployment can be divided into

several parts. Unemployment in India is pretty general. There is unemployment among the agricultural classes, there is unemployment among the traders, and there is unemployment among the educated classes. Practically all classes of people in this country suffer from unemployment. We contend that unemployment has been increased by foreign domination and by the fiscal policy of the British Government. We are not going at this time into this fiscal policy at all. We simply say that the fiscal policy is, to a great extent, responsible for increase of unemployment in this country all round. Take, for example, the question of trade. The exchange and currency policy of the Government has got a great deal to do with the question of unemployment among the trading classes. Ten or twenty years ago, particularly before the Reverse Council Bills policy[2], the trading classes of India were much happier and more prosperous than they have been since then, and that policy alone has created a great deal of unemployment in the country and considerable discontent among the trading classes.

Coming to the speech of the Honourable Mr. Calvert[3], I confess I expected a great speech from him, but I was sadly disappointed, and that to my mind is conclusive proof, if any proof were needed, that however well-disposed a foreign bureaucrat may be, and however great may be his anxiety to know the condition of the people of this country, he is not in a position to know those conditions so well as those who live in the midst of the people and who have been born and bred in the country. The statement made by him seemed to me to be devoid of reality. It bore no relation to one's experience of the actual state of things in the province from which he comes, and from which I have also the honour to come. I was really surprised at his speech. He said, first of all, that the educated classes had several openings which they did not take to, and as an illustration of one of the openings, he suggested that the educated classes should take to the manufacture of Persian wheels. I submit, Sir, that the trivial nature of the suggestion at once shows what little knowledge the Honourable Member has of the economic conditions of the province with which he was dealing. To suggest that manufacture of Persian wheels would give employment to a large class of educated people showed how little the bureaucracy understands our problems. If the educated classes take to the manufacture of iron Persian wheels, they will simply be replacing the earthen

pots in those wheels, and they will be displacing another class of people which earns its bread by that industry. In any case only a few men can find employment in that industry. It is not a solution either for employment in general or for unemployment among the educated classes. The Honourable Mr. Calvert further remarked that the Government is the largest employer of labour and that it spends a great deal of money on the employment of labour in running several industries. I admit both these propositions, but that does not show that the Government could not do more if they were entirely free to do so, I mean, entirely unfettered by outside considerations and acting purely on considerations of internal economy and Indian prosperity. So far as the question of capital is concerned, I may remind the Honourable Member that a very large amount of capital consisting of the revenues of the Government and of other reserves at the disposal of the Government is handed over to a Bank[4] which does not at all interest itself in the development of industries in this country. It is mostly employed in helping foreign traders. It gives its help to a certain extent to the Indian traders also, but not to the same extent to which it helps foreign trade. It gives no encouragement at all to the development of small industries, or cottage industries, or to any industries which may find employment for the educated classes or the people in general. As regards the point that India has a great deal of hoarded wealth and that a large amount of gold is imported into India which can be employed in the development of industries, I will not go into it as it is a very controversial point. I would simply point out that the rate of interest at which money is advanced by Indian banks in this country is a sure index of the fact that the amount of capital available is small and not at all sufficient. I submit it is the bounden duty of every Government to look into these problems. The Government may say that the main problems for them are the defence of the country from outside aggression and the maintenance of the law and order inside. What is the use of defending the country unless the people of this country are prosperous and there is something to be protected ? If the defence of the country means the defence of a few men belonging to the well-to-do classes, then, of course, it is a different matter, but the success of a Government is to be judged by the prosperity of the large mass of the people under them and not merely by the condition of a few. Judged by this test the present system of government is a decided failure. We want the Government to

recognise their responsibility in this matter and to realise that their duty does not consist only in providing for the defence of the country or in maintaining law and order. I grant that these are very important functions which all governments must attend to, but their duty does not end there. Their duty also consists in seeing that the people are prospering and that they are advancing in material prosperity. Judged by that standard we are afraid the present system of government does not fulfil that test. Of course, it may be said that the general prosperity of the people is to be judged by the amount of things they consume. The standard of comfort, the standard of life has risen, they say. I grant that, but at the same time, prices have also risen, and if you put these two things together you will find that the general masses of the country are not so prosperous as they are supposed to be. The educated classes in particular are suffering a great deal and very acutely from that lack of employment about which complaint has been so forcibly made by Honourable Members. The educated classes have been educated under a system of education which unfits them for any practical work in life. It has taken them away from the old walks of life, from their old occupations, and it does not fit them for any new occupations which will be economically profitable to them individually and to the country taken as a whole. The result is that they are suspended, as it were, in the middle.

It was said that there was no such problem in the Punjab. I am afraid the Honourable Member is not quite right. He does not move among the people so much as we do. There is a great deal of acute unemployment among the educated classes in the Punjab. (Mr. H. Calvert : "Question ?") It is a fact which cannot be questioned. The Honourable Member lives in great bungalows, and in drawing rooms and travels in comfortable conditions, while we practically spend all the twenty-four hours of our life among the people, living with the people, sharing their discomforts, their inconveniences, and their poverty. He may go on questioning but I am not prepared to admit that he or any member of the service to which he has the honour to belong, can know the conditions of the country better than we know or can represent them better than we do. We are born here, bred here. We have intimate relations with all classes of these people in life, in business, in trade and in everything, and therefore we know their conditions much better than any of these

Honourable gentlemen sitting on the Government Benches opposite. Unless we are to be declared mad or men entirely devoid of any commonsense or any patriotism or sense of duty to our countrymen, I submit that our statements should be accepted as true in this matter. These friends of ours judge things by figures compiled by themselves or by their subordinates under directions given by them, and they judge by the conditions of a few people. We judge by actual knowledge and experience gained from moment to moment, from day to day and from month to month, and naturally our views are much stronger and more reliable than the views of those sitting on the Government Benches. As Government servants, perhaps, they are bound by their figures, but we know how figures are compiled and what reliance can be placed on them. Therefore, I want to make it clear that the question of unemployment among the educated classes is not confined to Madras or Bengal, but it is practically general throughout India. Even in the Punjab the distress among the educated classes on account of unemployment is sufficient to warrant an inquiry into this matter. It is not a matter for the Local Governments. The question is general one and it ought to be taken up by the Central Government and disposed of by the Central Government after a comprehensive inquiry as to what should be done to remedy this state of things. The Local Governments might suggest palliatives. Perhaps they may not have sufficient funds. It is an all-India question and it ought to be considered on an all-India basis. There might be sub-committees making recommendations in regard to particular provinces, but on the whole the problem is an all-India problem and it ought to be dealt with on an all-India basis.

The Government of this country, and of every country, must accept its responsibility to provide at least the necessities of life to every member of the body politic. I mean the government of a country has to see that no member of the body politic is without the necessities of life, without the means to live. That responsibility is now recognised by all the civilised governments in the world. Here in India temporary relief is all that is considered. But in England they are dealing with remedies in order to make a permanent improvement. Temporary relief is also given by way of weekly allowances in order to remove the distress immediately. The unemployment among the industrial classes of India is certainly

education among the labouring classes do not justify the following of the provisions of the English Statute, and also that the newness of the movement and its infancy justified Government's action in introducing this halting measure. I consider, Sir, that much has often been made of the newness of conditions in India. I wonder if the Government or the champions of Government ever consider that they are responsible directly for this newness of conditions. There are certain social conditions that have been introduced into this country by the Government themselves. Why should the Government then hesitate or halt in following the logical consequence of those new introductions or new institutions ? Industrialism in its present form is no doubt an entirely new introduction in this country, and industrialism necessarily leads to trade unionism. There can be no guarantee for the interests of labour and of the workers in this industrial movement without a network of Trade Unions to protect and guard their interests. It may be all very well to sermonise on the duties of employers, on their benevolent motives, on their self-interest to keep their employees contented and satisfied. We have heard these sermons from time immemorial. All governments and employers believe, and may be sincerely, that they do anything for the good of the people ; and whenever people make or advance any claim for their better and more effective representation in the government or for political rights involving any interference with vested interests, they are in the wrong and the government and the capitalist are always right. The claim is that the government and the employers know the interests of the workers better than they themselves do. We know what value to attach to this argument ; and my complaint is that the Government whenever they introduce legislation of this kind always harp on not blindly following the English law. Whenever there is a question of the expansion of the liberties of the subject they decline to follow the English practice, but when the Government want to restrict the liberties of the subject they justify their action on the ground that they are only bringing the law here into line with the English law. It is a question of pick and choose whatever suits them. I maintain that is not fair. Even in the political sphere as in the industrial sphere, it is that argument that always blocks progress and stands in the way of our introducing institutions which are the logical consequence of the social conditions which have been introduced into this country by

the British Government themselves. Sir, I consider that the arguments that have been advanced by the Honourable Member for not going further than he has gone in this legislation, and for not giving the same rights and immunities to unregistered Trade Unions in this law as have been given in the English law are not cogent. I will take them one by one. But before I take them one by one I just want to make a reference to the English legislation of 1871.

Sir, when that Act was passed, which continues still to be the principal Act laying down the law relating to Trade Unions in Great Britain and which has not been repealed or substantially altered in its provisions, it at once proceeded not only to make provision for the registration of Trade Unions but at the same time to declare the law as to the rights and immunities of all Trade Unions whether they were registered or not registered. The English legislation of 1871 relating to Trade Unions took two forms. One was on the civil side, providing for registration of Trade Unions and declaring the law relating to them and the other was on the criminal side making a law, called the Criminal Amendment Law. On the civil side certain amendments were subsequently made but nothing substantial was altered. On the criminal side they had to make certain important changes in the light of later experience with which we have nothing to do for the present. Now, it is said that the condition of education among the working classes in this country prevents the Government from going as far as the English Statute of 1871 did. Well, Sir, in my judgment there is absolutely nothing in that argument. Was the English worker better educated in 1871 than the Indian worker is today ? We must remember that the first Compulsory Education Act was passed in the British Parliament in 1870. Was the Trade Union movement in England in a very advanced stage in 1871 ? I submit it was not, and the condition of education among the working classes was in no way better than the condition among the workers today in India is. Moreover, there is a confusion always made between literacy and education. I grant that literacy is a great asset in modern times, but it is not education, and I am not prepared to accept that the workers in India are less educated than their fellow-workers anywhere else simply because of their illiteracy. They are no doubt at a certain disadvantage on account of their illiteracy. I attach great importance

to literacy ; but what education really means are the changes that education brings about in one's character and one's habits and manners. I submit, judged by that test, the Indian worker is no less educated than the English worker. If education is to be tested by one's sobriety, by one's moral character and by other such qualities, I contend that the Indian worker is much more educated than his fellow-worker in England or any where else in Europe or America. Then, Sir, I want to ask what has education to do with the rights and immunities that are covered by clauses 17, 18, and 19 of this Bill ?[2] Those rights and immunities are inherent to any combination of workers made for the protection of their interests. Those rights and immunities have practically nothing to do with education. I could understand the plea of lack of education in regard to those provisions of the Bill which lay down the procedure of registration and which require the control of funds and the control of the proceedings of Trade Unions. In that connection there might be something to be said for the necessity of literacy ; but so far as the laying down of the law with regard to the rights of the workers as such, and the immunities which are inherent in the very fact of their combination, is concerned, they have nothing to do with the condition of education in those classes. They are, I repeat, inherent in the institution of trade unionism and that was exactly the reason why the British Legislature in 1871 did not confine that Act simply to the declaration of the rights of registered Trade Unions but extended it to unregistered Trade Unions also. What is a Trade Union ? I do not want to define it very exactly. Speaking roughly it is a combination of workers to protect themselves against the combination of employers, or even if there is no combination of employers, for the purpose of furthering their interests and protecting their rights. Now how can their rights be protected and their interests furthered by that combination ? By occasional strikes, by collective bargaining, as we have been told just now by my Honourable friend Mr. Wilson,[3] and by other similar things. But if Trade Unions are to be deprived of those rights, whether they are registered or unregistered, I wonder what is left of trade unionism. So I contend that education has nothing to do with the right and immunities that are covered by clauses 17, 18 and 19 of the present Bill, and that the English Legislature was perfectly right in granting these rights and immunities to their workers by

the Legislation of 1871. Even today at the present moment, after that law has been in force in England for over fifty years, there are three kinds of Trade Unions in England—Trade Unions registered under the law relating to Trade Unions, Trade Unions registered under the Friendly Societies Act and the like, and unregistered Trade Unions. Now it is said that this movement is in its infancy in this country. Very well, if that is true, is it expected that this movement will grow so big from its infancy that there shall be no unregistered Trade Unions at all, or any other combinations of unregistered workers in this country to require the protection of the law for the purpose of collective bargaining and for the purpose of strikes etc.? The law on these points at the present moment in India is in a very fluid condition. The Honourable Member in charge of the Bill, while introducing the Bill, said that under the law as it stood at present, people going on strike or acting in combination in restraint of trade could be prosecuted under the conspiracy sections of the Indian Penal Code and could be proceeded against in civil courts for damages, for breach of contract and otherwise. Well, Sir, so far as I am aware—I say so subject to correction—Trade Unions now have been existing in this country for a number of years; we have been hearing of strikes all round and we have never heard of any prosecution having been started by Government under the conspiracy sections of the Indian Penal Code against anybody who took part in a strike. There has been, I am told, one case of damages in the Madras Presidency (An Honourable Member: "It was withdrawn.") but it was not proceeded with. Anyhow I do not know the facts; but I have not heard of any other cases having been instituted either in Bombay or at Nagpur, or at Ahmedabad, where there have been many strikes, either for damages on the ground of breach of contract or on the ground of torts, against any strikers or against any combination of workers. That is the present condition of things which this law proposes to change. This law restricts practically the enjoyment of these rights and privileges to registered Trade Unions only. The question arises as to what will be the status of unregistered Trade Unions after the passing of this Bill. Supposing a large number of workers in the Bombay mills strike. Some will belong to the registered Trade Unions, others will not belong to any registered Trade Union; some may be members of unregistered

Trade Unions or they may be members of no Unions at all. Suppose a thousand or five thousand or ten thousand people strike. Will Government give protection only to those who are members of registered Trade Unions and prosecute those who are not members of a registered Trade Union ? It will be an absolutely anomalous position ; and if the Government do not mean to do that, then where was the use and where was the necessity of making this distinction between registered and unregistered Trade Unions ? It will only help mischievous people to insist upon prosecutions being started or upon proceedings being taken against some of the workers. Now, I may say at once that I am not fond of strikes at all. In fact I deprecate hasty strikes altogether ; and I am quite conscious that sometimes strikes are fomented by people who have no business to advise any strikes. If this was a law to prevent such strikes and to prevent Trade Unions being exploited in that way, it would be quite welcome. I have absolutely nothing to say against that part of the law which relates to the control of funds, the keeping and auditing of accounts, etc. It is a good law. But when you proceed to take away the protection of the law in their inherent rights and immunities from certain classes of workers, simply because they have not registered themselves, then I think you are not proceeding on sound and satisfactory lines. There you are drawing a distinction which is not at all advisable either in the interests of progress in general or in the interests of the workers themselves. Here again, Sir, I want to make it clear from my place in this Assembly that I want all Trade Unions to register themselves under this Bill when it becomes law. I do not want any of them to remain unregistered. But whatever we may say or we may do in that respect, we know that all Trade Unions are not going to register at once, and that the development or the fostering of the Trade Union movement will not be helped very much by this restriction of the rights and immunities of workers by clauses 17, 18 and 19 of this Bill. In fact, as I said before, it is bound to create a situation which would be deplorable from every point of view.

Other grounds also have been advanced for proceeding very cautiously with the law of Trade Unions, and one of the grounds is that the movement is entirely new to India. I deny that proposition in toto. The movement may be new in its present form.

But the essence of the movement and the principles of the movement of trade unionism are as ancient and old in India as the snow-clad mountains of the Himalayas. What is the principle of trade unionism ? What is at the back of it ? What is the foundaion of it ? The foundation of it is the right of collective bargaining, and the right of certain people to lay down their terms under which they will serve the public or do certain work, and also to impose penalties for the breach or the violations of any decisions given by those combinations or of any rules laid down by them. Now, what are the occupational castes in India ? They are practically closed Trade Unions ! And how have the Trade Unions developed ? All authorities on trade unionism are agreed that the ancient guilds of India and the guilds of mediaeval Europe were the ancestors of Trade Unions as we see them today. We have still this class of institutions in India, though not exactly in the same form in which they existed in the olden times. We have many occupational castes which are working practically in the same way as Trade Unions are working in other countries. What are these strikes ? Strike is only another name for *hartal.* Who has not heard of the *hartal* of sweepers or of water-carriers or of butchers or of similar castes ? Whenever any of these classes of workers want the redress of their grievances, which otherwise they cannot get from society or from certain classes of society, they go out on *hartal.* Do you know that the decisions of the *panchayats* of these occupational castes are as binding upon all their members as the decisions of any Trade Union could possibly be ? Whatever may be the statute law and whatever threats of prosecution you may hold out, no member of an occupational caste has the courage or can possibly have the courage to violate the decisions of their *panchayats* or of doing anything in disregard of the orders of that *panchayat* ; they obey them literally; they pay the fines and they abstain from working for those families or for those persons who have been interdicted by the vote of the *panchayat* as not to be served. We see it every day and therefore the real principles of trade unionism and the essence of them are not new to India. The movement is not in its infancy here. The movement in its present "civilised" form— and I would like to put the word civilised in inverted commas— with its account books and printed rules and bye-laws may be new ; but the movement itself is certainly not new, and even today the

Government do not in any way prosecute those caste people who go on *hartal* in the way in which I have stated before you, and who impose their own rules and lay down their own conditions of service. They restrain and prevent people from going and serving anybody against those rules and except under conditions which they have laid down, and the Government never think of prosecuting them. What are these clauses 17, 18 and 19 ? They are practically a reproduction of that custom, of those practices, that have been recognised all over the world as necessary for the success of trade unionism. They existed in this country in one form or another from very old times. I think, therefore, that the argument that the movement is new and that we ought to proceed with very great caution does not hold water at all. In fact Government should have taken advantage of this prevailing custom and of the prevailing practices in this country in this respect and taking their courage in their hands gone further to make the law almost on the same lines on which the English Statute was framed in 1871. That would have made the situation clear ; that would have made the law clear. We have been told in another connection that wherever there are differences about the meaning of the law or wherever there are difficulties of interpretation, it is the business of this House to make it clear. We were told so in the arguments during the debate on the Contempt of Courts Bill.[4] Well, in this case the law has been made more uncertain and liable to be misinterpreted than it was before. It would have been much better if the law had been made clear that so far as the protection of the rights of a combination of workers now covered by clauses 17, 18 and 19 was concerned, that protection was extended to all combinations of workers regardless of their being registered. I submit this Bill is very defective in that respect. But for this, I would have been in a position to congratulate the Honourable Member in charge for having successfully piloted this Bill through. But I am sorry I cannot consider this legislation to be entirely satisfactory or as one that has been framed on sound lines to prevent further agitation, and litigation. I am afraid we shall soon be compelled to introduce an amending Bill. All that trouble could have been saved if the Honourable Member in charge had seen fit to extend the rights and immunities mentioned in clauses 17, 18 and 19 to unregistered Trade Unions also. I think a colossal mistake has been committed, and it will only lead to nothing but trouble and litigation. The

very fact that these clauses relate only to registered Trade Unions and not to unregistered Trade Unions will be used as an argument that the law does not justify the exercise of those rights and those immunities by any unregistered Trade Unions or by members of any unregistered Trade Unions. We are afraid that in relation to future strikes there may be a harvest of criminal prosecutions, suits for damages, suits for injunctions, etc., brought against the workers or strikers and there will be litigation all round. The funds of the Trade Unions will be wasted in defending themselves in those suits. All this could have been avoided if the Government had taken courage and made the law clearly applicable to all Trade Unions. That was the only right course for them if they really meant to foster Trade Unions in this country. I am afraid, Sir, these clauses are liable to be misconstrued, and the argument will certainly be that the Legislature having deliberately chosen to confine the rights and privileges and immunities granted under these sections to registered Trade Unions only, it means that those rights and immunities cannot be exercised by members of unregistered Trade Unions. I submit that the English law on this subject is very sound, and it ought to have been followed here. When you are introducing English institutions in this country, certainly no one wants to follow them blindly, but English institutions require English safeguards. You want to introduce English institutions in this country without English safeguards, which will lead to nothing but trouble. Either have the courage not to introduce any English institutions at all and not to take the analogies of English life, social, commercial or any other, but if you do introduce English institutions, you must have the English safeguards also. Unfortunately the practice is that whenever you want to make the law stringent, you come and say that you are just making the law in India as it is in England. But when it comes to the expansion of our liberties and rights, when it comes to a question of giving us the same privileges which are the necessary logical consequences of English institutions then you halt and you are frightened by vested interests. I do not want to make any insinuation against the employers because, as I said the other day, these employers are human beings and they naturally look to their own interests. These combinations of workers, these strikes, these collective bargainings do interfere in the making of their profits and cause them other troubles too, and therefore naturally they are not interested

seeing the rapid development of Trade Unions in this country. Therefore, I am bound to say that, although I am not going to oppose this Bill at its present stage, I am deliberately of opinion that the law as laid down by it, is very defective and unsatisfactory and that we shall have to come to this House very soon to have the law put in a proper form and to have the rights and privileges granted by clauses 17, 18 and 19 extended to the labouring classes regardless of their being registered or unregistered.

24. DEMAND FOR REPEAL OF REGULATION III OF 1818

I HAVE GREAT pleasure in congratulating the Honourable Member[1] who represents the Government of Bengal in this House, on the magnificent speech he has made. It was an exquisite speech, exquisite in diction, exquisite in delivery and also in that particular quality of speech for which Irishmen are famous all the world over, the abundance of wit. But I am afraid it was devoid of another element which makes a speech great, that is, sense and logic. I have heard Irishmen in different parts of the world : their forensic eloquence, their eloquence on the stage and also in Parliament is their distinguishing feature. But the trouble with them is that when they get into the employment of the British they prostitute their talent. Not that there is anything wrong with their hearts, but their environments are so changed that that change affects their mentality almost completely. We have had in this country ample experience, very bitter though, of another great Irish administrator[2], who, though a master of words, master of rhetoric, master of the art of making untruth appear as truth, possessed the same mentality as that of the Honourable Member opposite. I need not name him. Probably everybody in this House understands whom I mean. He almost succeeded in making a revolution in a part of the country which is not known for revolutionary tendencies at all. Yet he

Full text of the speech by Lala Lajpat Rai in the Central Legislative Assembly delivered on 12 February 1926 on the Bengal State Prisoners Regulation (Repeal) Bill moved by Amar Nath Dutt. In 1924 the Assembly had passed a Resolution recommending the repeal of Regulation III of 1818, but the Government of India did not take steps to repeal this Regulation. The Government on the other hand used the Regulation to suppress political activities in violation of the assurances given on the recommendations of the Repressive Laws Committee that its use would be limited to its original purposes and not against British Indian subjects. In view of this Amar Nath Dutt introduced the Bill for the repeal of the Regulation.

suceeeded in bringing into operation laws which could only be justified by the existence of a great revolutionary movement. I can well understand the difficulties of the Bengal Government if they are surrounded by officers of the mentality of my Honourable friend who made that speech here. My Honourable friend began, Sir, with saying that we in this House seem to be more concerned with the unmaking of laws and with the repeal of the Ten Commandments than with the making of laws and acting up to the Commandments. We, Sir, not only in this House but in this country have no concern with the Ten Commandments as such. The majority of our people, the vast bulk of us, have no particular attachment to them.

An Honourable Member : Surely !

Another Honourable Member : Shame !

Lala Lajpat Rai : It is not a matter for shame, it is to our credit, because we have had the essence of these Commandments long before they were enacted, we had no particular need of them. My Honourable friends, on the other side, did need them and so they got them. We had all these Commandments in our country not only in our laws but we practised them in our lives long before my Honourable friends received them. So we never stood in need of any Commandments at all, and we do not stand in need of them even now, nor are we much concerned with the unmaking of laws, because, circumstanced as we are, we can neither make them nor unmake them. We can only voice the feelings of our country and of our countrymen, and that we shall faithfully do in spite of all the difficulties that may be put in our way. So that part of the Honourable Member's speech, Sir, I think, may be passed over.

Then my learned friend referred to that great voice of Bengal at whose feet many of us sat to learn our political work and get our political knowledge, the late Sir Surendranath Banerjea. I grant Sir, that Sir Surendranath Banerjea was the voice of Bengal in 1905 in 1907, and in 1909 when the nine Bengalees were deported.[3] He represented the true feelings of Bengal when he denounced the deportations of 1907, and when he equally denounced in the strongest possible language the deportations of 1909. I would be the last person to say a word which might cast a reflection upon the honour of that great man. But a change of environment brings about a change of views, and sometimes a deplorable one too. What Sir

Surendranath Banerjea denounced, as a representative of the people, as the voice of Bengal, he unfortunately lived to help in administering as servant of the Government.[4] It was the latter fact that brought about the change if any. I mean no reflections when I say, that the fact that he was no longer the voice of Bengal after he had joined the Government, was proved by his defeat at the elections.[5] The voice of Bengal at that time was not Sir Surendranath Banerjea but another great Bengalee whom also my friend has quoted, and who[6] denounced Regulation III of 1818 and the Ordinance in unmeasured terms. I have yet to learn, Sir, that excepting those in the service of Government, there are any Bengalees, prominent or otherwise, who have ever supported Regulation III of 1818 or the Ordinance.

Then, Sir, another feature of the Honourable Member's speech was that he seemed to think that Bengal was all India. Regulation III of 1818 applies to the whole of northern India, if not to the whole of India. I think it applies to the whole of India, but in any case it does apply to the whole of northern India. There are other parts of this country besides Bengal which have to say something about Regulation III of 1818. All his arguments based on his knowledge of Bengal are therefore not sufficient to justify the continuance of this Regulation on the Statute-book. As for Bengal, the special circumstances of that province have compelled the Government to frame an Ordinance for it.[7] We are at the present moment not concerned with that Ordinance. We are concerned only with Regulation III of 1818. It seemed to me rather queer, that my Honourable friend's love for Bengal should have resulted in his having forgotten the history and the civilisation of his own country, nay also the history and the civilisation of Europe and America. He says that the necessities of Government, of administration, are such as to make it compulsory for every Government, be it civilised or uncivilised, to have a law of that kind. I am afraid my Honourable friend was guilty of overstating in making that statement. In my judgment the easiest test of the civilisation of a Government or of the fact that that Government has moral and judicial hold upon the minds of its subjects, is that it never needs a Regulation of this kind, and I challenge my friend to quote one single civilized country where a law of this kind was ever enacted coupled with a denial of the right of Habeas Corpus to the subjects. I have known countries

where laws of this kind were enacted, but only for short durations, and the people were never deprived of the right of Habeas Corpus nor was the right of the judicial courts to determine the nature of the circumstances in which those laws could be applied taken away. I know, Sir, that sometimes Acts of that kind are passed in civilised countries in times of turmoil, but can the Honourable gentleman point out a single country where for a period of 150 years a law of this nature has been on the Statute-book without any attempt to repeal or to modify it ? I assert there is no such civilised country on the face of the earth. Either we are over-civilised in this country according to this test, or it seems to me that the Honourable gentleman's reading of contemporary history and past history has not been correct. Is he not aware that murderous attempts have from time to time been made upon the Presidents of the United States ? Has he never heard of a movement called the syndicalist movement which has ramifications all over Europe and America ? Is it not a fact that there is no country in Europe or America which is free from revolutionary movements ? Has any country or any Government ever tried to enact Regulations of this kind to put down such movements ? I submit there is not a single instance which can be quoted where anything of that kind has ever been attempted. I have, Sir, in my own humble way made a study of the subject and I have not come across a single instance where any thing parallel to what is being done in this country was ever attempted or done. Here in India we have, besides, Regulation III of 1818, an extraodinary Ordinance (the Bengal Ordinance) and a continuance of the denial of the right of Habeas Corpus to the subject even in times of peace. One can understand the use of such measures in times of war, in times of extraordinary excitement, but here in this country in times of peace, are we to have a law of the nature of a perpetual enactment, always in force ? It is never reconsidered, nor suspended, but always remains there as the sword of Damocles hanging over the heads of the people, who have to carry on a fight for their rights.

Another remark was made by the Honourable Member opposite that the circumstances in Bengal are such that they cannot but apply this law. My friend, however, forgets a particular set of circumstances is brought into existence by another set of circumstances. He says they are often told that it is their tyranny, their oppression, that is at the bottom of the revolutionary movement. Well, Sir, I do not

know. It may not be tyranny according to their standards, to them it may not look like repression, but to us it does certainly seem that it is the use of such repressive laws in times of peace that is mainly responsible for the existence of the revolutionary movement. There are some other causes also at the bottom of this revolutionary movement; the revolutionary movement is based on certain facts of life. Have the Government made any attempt to change those facts of life ? Is not my friend aware that his own country had to pass through tribulations of this kind before it succeeded in establishing its right to have its own Government. He says that soon after the establishment of that Government, that Government passed a law on the same lines as the Bengal Regulation of 1818. But he omitted to mention that even that Government had to get the sanction for that law from their Parliament every year. It expires at the end of every year. It is not perpetual and cannot go on from year to year. It is brought before the Parliament every year in order to be freshly sanctioned. But in my judgment no country, no Government, is entitled to call itself civilised which has recourse to such laws in ordinary times. It is only possible where a Government suffers either from a lack of confidence in its power or from lack of confidence in its moral and judicial hold upon the minds of the people. I have yet to know that in the history of the world a civilized Government and a mighty Government has had in times of peace to have recourse to such a law for the purpose of protecting its prestige or preserving the peace and tranquillity of the country. I submit this is a confession of weakness which is unworthy of this Government. When we ask for the repeal of this law, we are making an attempt to vindicate the honour and good name of England and not to disturb the equanimity of Englishmen in this country. It is—I hope my friend will pardon me for using this expression—it is a matter of standing shame to Great Britain that such a law should be on the Statute-book of India without the Government having ever desired its repeal or suspension. Once more the Honourable Member repeated the plea based on the difficulties of getting evidence for the conviction of those charged with revolutionary crime. But all this was fully considered by the Repressive Laws Committee,[8] and they came to the deliberate conclusion that, except for the Frontier Province, this law should be repealed. They were of opinion that it was not needed in any other part of the country. So, Sir, I think it is too late in the day now to come here

and say that this law is necessary for the existence of this Government. Are we to understand that after 170 years of British rule the British Government in this country is still so powerless that it cannot rely on its judicial courts or on its moral prestige to maintain peace and tranquillity, and that the peace and tranquillity of the country was being constantly endangered by these few individuals whom the Government gets hold of from time to time under Regulation III of 1818 ? Sir, there is no necessity for this Regulation except that the Government is affected by a kind of intoxication which one gets from unlimited power. The frequent exercise of unlimited power, uncontrolled and unchecked power, brings out a mentality which compels the possessors thereof to have laws of this kind for the sake of convenience. They want these weapons to be used whenever they cannot confidently go to the courts. My friend Mr. Neogy and, I think, Mr. Amar Nath Dutt also referred to the revelations recently made with regard to the deportations of 1909. They were the deportations of Babus Aswini Kumar Dutt and Krishna Kumar Mittra. The Government only recently gave out the true reason of the deportation of these gentlemen. And what was that confession ? It was a confession of abject weakness on the part of the Bengal Government. It was admitted that Babus Aswini Kumar Dutt and Krishna Kumar Mittra were not guilty of any revolutionary crime, they were not even suspected of any revolutionary crime, but that the Government of Bengal thought that the safety and tranquillity of the province demanded that they should be put out of the way. And why ? Because they were leading the Swadeshi movement, they had not committed any crime, but because the British Government wanted to put down the Swadeshi movement and that could not be achieved except by their being deported, and put out of the way for some time. Therefore the Government of Bengal had recourse to Regulation III of 1818 in order to achieve that object. May I ask if that was the honourable course for any Government to adopt ? I submit that it was not. My Honourable friend said the other day, that the abuse of a law was no reason for the repeal of that law. My reply is this, that if there is a law which lends itself to be abused so often, and so flagrantly, then it is a bad law and not a good law and it should not be on the Statute-book. Only such laws ought to remain on the Statute-book which are not liable to be so misused as Regulation III of 1818 has been. It was

said that the revolutionaries could not be put on their trial before the ordinary courts of justice because the witnesses ran the risk of being murdered ; but you know, Sir, that this is a lame excuse. In spite of that risk trials for conspiracy are going on in Bengal. Besides people are being interned under the Bengal Ordinance also. There are only a few people who are put out of the way under Regulation III of 1818. Does any one mean to say that only in these cases there was or is the risk of producing evidence and that in the other cases it was or is absolutely safe to do so ? I submit, that such a contention cannot hold water. People are dealt with under Regulation III of 1818 not that there is any risk to the life of the witnesses or anybody, but because there is no evidence against them which any court would accept. Here is this Governmnet established by law, as is often said, which takes people unawares, and without giving them any inkling of the charge against them removes them from the country. Some others it puts on trial, and when the trial fails, when by its own procedure it finds that it cannot convict those people, it applies Regulation III of 1818 and imprisons them. Is that worthy of a civilised Government, is that worthy of a great Government which claims to base its right to govern on the affections of the people, on the love of the people, and on the attachment of the people ? I would beg Honourable Members to put themselves in our position and imagine what would be their feelings in similar conditions, and then judge the situation, and sit in judgment on us. Are those young men who are carried away by their emotions, which cause them to do things which I say are certainly not desirable....

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman : Which are or which may not be ?

Lala Lajpat Rai : I say that they are not desirable. But don't sit in judgment on them in the way you do. You should remember that it is an atmosphere of hopelessness, almost of despair, that has affected their minds. Most of them have become revolutionaries because having tried every possible means of getting a decent livelihood they failed to get it. They lost their balance and took to methods which are certainly not desirable. I do not condone their offences, I do not want them to go that way ; I beg of them not to do it—yet if they do not follow my advice I cannot pass a harsh judgment on them.

My friend made another point. He quoted from the speech of Sir Abdur Rahim about Mussalmans[9]. Now, Sir Abdur Rahim might have for his own purposes made a statement which suited his case, but he did not mean to cast any reflection on the patriotism of his co-religionists. Am I to believe that the galling humiliation of foreign rule, of being dealt with under Regulation III is not felt by Mussalmans ? Sir, such a statement is a libel on Muhammadan patriotism and I hope my Muhammadan friends in this House will repudiate it. I do not think Sir Abdur Rahim meant anything of that kind. But when a statement of that kind is quoted by my friend on the other side, for the sake of his argument (he will pardon me for saying so), I can only call it a dirty trick. There is no other name for it. It is a deliberate attempt to create dissensions between Muhammadans and Hindus on a question on which they are absolutely of one mind. I believe there is no difference between Hindus and Muhammadans on this point. It may be that there are Hindus and Muhammadans who will vote against us, who always vote against us, but the reasons for that conduct are different—not that they like Regulation III of 1818 more than we do—but here again I would like to point out that my friend need not be so cock sure of his facts. Mr. Neogy gave the name of one Muhammadan gentleman who was actually arrested in Bengal. I know of another case in the Punjab. He was an M.A., and his name was Gulam Hussain. He was arrested under Regulation III of 1818 and confined in the Lahore Central Jail at the same time I was there. During the few months he was there he was being constantly visited and spoken to by high placed C.I.D. officials. He was then released. Now, Regulation III of 1818 does not justify the detention of any person for the purpose of any inquiry or investigation. The only justification for the application of that Regulation and for an arrest under it arises when the tranquillity of the country is in danger, or when there is commotion. You cannot arrest a man under the Regulation for the purpose of making an inquiry or for the purpose of making an investigation, so that after a time when he has rotted in jail for several months, you find that there is no case against him, you just discharge him. I think the facts about Muhammadans referred to by my friend are not quite as he made them out to be, and certainly he cannot be so sure of Muhammadan mentality remaining the same hereafter. It may be that the Muhammadans are in a position to control themselves better. If they are, I congratulate them. Or it may be that there are other

circumstances which have not brought them into that unfortunate frame of mind in which the Hindu young men have found themselves, but it may be that the times are coming when they may be driven irresistibly to the same course. I hope not : I wish not.

I may remind the House of what was said in the Report of the Rowlatt Committee[10]. It was said there that at the bottom of the revolutionary movement in Bengal was the unemployment of the educated classes. The Muhammadans in that province are not educated in such large numbers as to find themselves in the clutches of unemployment by reason of that education and so they do not go in the revolutionary movement. The Hindus have been educated in large numbers and have remained unemployed. That is one of the reason why you find more Hindus in the revolutionary movement than Muhammadans. This kind of argument, I submit does not go very far, this way or that way.

I can certainly accept the contention that there are occasions when the Government does need extraordinary powers, but I cannot bring myself to believe that the conditions in this country are such as to make it necessary for the Government to have that power always, all the twelve months of the year or from year to year, without at any time dispensing with the law which gives them that power. That is a statement I cannot accept. But if the Government must have that power, let it change the laws so as to enable us to question those proceedings in law courts. That will be something reasonable, something sensible. But so long as you keep these laws and also keep your criminal law in such a condition as to make it impossible for us to question the correctness of these proceedings in any court of law ; I submit you impose a double injury on the people of this country which they have not in any way deserved. My friend has paid great compliments to Bengal. I can repay those compliments by saying that Irishmen are very gifted, very talented, very able, and yet I have never known them to be very devoted to the British Government or to law and order (Laughter ! An Honourable Member : "Except in India !"), yes, except in India where they are the paid servants of the British. That exception holds good because all Irishmen in the service of the British Government, with a few noble exceptions, have believed that the interests of law and order in this country required that the people of country should be denied all such rights as they and their countrymen have been fighting for in their

own country.

Now, Sir, I sympathise with my firiend. I am sorry for having been forced to make these remarks, but he has put me into that unpleasant position by the extraordinary speech he has made. I liked it very much, but there was no sense in it. I wish he had used his eloquence, his rhetorical powers in a better cause. I do not want to detain this House very long because other Honourable Members have to speak, but I just want to say one or two words more. Some reference was made to the speech of Mr. C. R. Das. I am going to leave it to my friends from Bengal to take up that part of the speeeh, but as far as I remember, Mr. Das no doubt admitted that there was a revolutionary movement in Bengal and that he had tried to change the mentality of those people who he thought were concerned with this revolutionary movement, but he never admitted that any of these men who were arrested under Regulation III of 1818, were concerned with this revolutionary movement.

Mr. J. T. Donovan : Will the Honourable Member consult the volume of the Bengal Legislative Council proceedings which I quoted this morning ?

Lala Lajpat Rai : I have not consulted them, Sir. I would like Honourable Members to consult them, to read them, but I can never believe that Mr. C. R. Das could ever have made a statement of that kind. He admitted, and rightly admitted and for that I give him credit, that there was a revolutionary movement in Bengal and that some people who were dealt with under the Ordinance were involved in it, but he never admitted there was any suitable case for the arrest of people under Regulation III of 1818, and that is the point we are concerned with here. We are not concerned with the Ordinance or the revolutionary movement : we are concerned with the justification for keeping Regulation III on the Statute-book. That is the issue before us.

Mr. J. T. Donovan : May I inform my Honourable friend that in January, 1924, when Mr. Das made that statement, there was no question of the Ordinance. The Regulation had been used for two months.

Lala Lajpat Rai : I have put the issue very clearly before my Honourable friend. Can he quote any words of Mr. C. R. Das—I will sit down to enable him to do so—in which Mr. Das admitted that these people who were arrested under Regulation III were concerned

with the revolutionary movement ?

Mr. J. T. Donovan : I quoted them this morning.

Lala Lajpat Rai : Will you quote them again ? I will leave it at that and let the House judge for itself. So far as I know they do not mean that.

Mr. J. T. Donovan : You have not read them.

Lala Lajpat Rai : It was also said that the repeal of this Regulation III would take away the stock-in-trade of the professional politicians. Well, Sir, there are no professsional politicians in this country. They may grow in time, but they are not there yet, and certainly not in the sense the term "professional politician" is known either in Ireland or in the United States. I intend no reflection on Ireland or the United States, but I know too much and I cannot erase from my mind the knowledge I possess of these countries where Irishmen are to be found in abundance. But so far as my knowledge goes—I am speaking subject to correction—there are no professional politicians in India. I say, they may grow. We are growing in "civilisation" and perhaps that is a part of civilisation. All those things are bound to come ; they are the necessary concomitants of the civilisation which we are taking or borrowing with pride and perhaps with doubtful wisdom from the West. But if by the repeal of Regulation III of 1818 my Honourable friend can deprive the professional politician of his stock-in-trade, why does he not do it ? He will be doing a service to the State if, by his help, this kind of argument is taken away from their mouths by the repeal of Regulation III. They will employ their time more profitably and perhaps to the usefulness of both the State and the nation.

In the end, Sir, I have an appeal to make to the Government, if there is any chance of my appeal having the least possible effect, which I am afraid there is not, that if they at any time find the peace of the country threatened or endangered, they have the machinery of the legislature to make such a law. Why should they try to keep this Regulation permanently on the Statute-book, and why should they use it for purposes other than those which were contemplated by the Regulation itself ?

Sir, I have so far spoken mainly about the Bengal deportees. I need not refer again to my own case as there are other cases as

well. But may I draw your attention to another aspect of the case. Perhaps you do not do much injury to these people whom you arrest. You deprive them no doubt of their pleasure ; you prevent them from fulfilling their duties in life, and thus inflict injury on them. But at the same time you raise them in reputation ; you make heroes of them and thus cause a greater injury to your own interests and to the reputation of your Government and also add to the volume of unrest that prevails. That perhaps will not appeal to you, but cannot you see that by having resort to proceedings of this kind you are constantly engaged in a vicious circle of unrest and repression ? Do away with these Regulations ; do away with these repressive laws ; and then try and see, if you need them again. You have at all times the power given to you in the Statute, in the law, to make these emergency laws. Nothing deprives you of that. You have not shown that if you had not arrested these men, of whom you have been speaking, the whole country would have been simply flooded with blood and would have been lost to you. If at any time hereafter you find it necessary in the interests of peace to enact a law of this kind temporarily, you have the machinery ready at hand to do it. But for God's sake remove this Regulation from the Statute-book, at least for some time. Let the people feel confident that you have some sense of justice and fairplay, that you do mean to govern this country, as long as you have to govern it (before the last Home Member, as my friend has said, books his baggage from Bombay), with at least some show of traditional British justice. Sir, I support the motion.

25. HINDUS AND POLITICS

THERE ARE a number of well-intentioned patriotic Hindus who think that the Indian National Congress has caused great harm to the Hindu community by its anti-Government attitude and by its demand for Swaraj ; and that the best way to rehabilitate the community in the eyes of the Government is to change the policy towards Government, to discontinue the demand for Swaraj, to shut up the Indian National Congress for five or more years, and to place themselves at the disposal of the Government for such use as the latter might choose to make of them in the carrying on of their Imperial rule. With the best of goodwill and with all respect for the intentions and motives of these friends, I cannot help remarking that to me the entire proposition, both premises and conclusion, seems to be the result of confused thinking and faulty reading of history and politics. Let us examine the proposition. It amounts to this : (a) that the Hindus should not have started the Congress ; (b) that the Hindus should have steered clear of political agitation : (c) that they should not have demanded Swaraj ; (d) that in that case the Government would have patronised them, ignored the Muslims and helped the Hindus in becoming so rich and prosperous as to place them in a position of overwhelming superiority over the Muslims, amounting to the permanent subordination of the latter to the former ; (e) that the absence of political agitation and political struggle would have left the Hindus free to effect social reform in the community and bring about communal solidarity to an extent not achieved now ; (f) that thus strengthened, they would have been in an invulnerable position and able to defy the Muslims and establish Hindu Swaraj by their own efforts.

A series of three articles published in *The People* of 25 April, 2 May and 9 May, 1926.

These friends of ours forget that the impulse for freedom—religious, social and political--was the irresistible result of one and the same set of causes, that it was not humanly possible to deny an outlet to this impulse in all its ramifications. If they think that the impulse for religious and social freedom could have been satisfied without an important part of the same impulse asserting itself in full force in other ways they read their sociology and psychology entirely in a wrong way. The impulse for life and growth, for progress and expansion, for expression and action, is one indivisible impulse. The only limitations that can be put on it are such as relate to the practicability or impracticability of measures adopted or the mentality of the person or persons affected thereby. When an impulse of that kind is born, it finds expression in many forms. Every person expresses it according to his own valuation of things. In some it takes the desire of religious reform ; in others it is expressed in terms of social reform ; and in still others, it gives rise to movements of political and economic freedom. Thus spread, it gives birth to various movements, according to the mentality of different groups of men and women influenced by it.

That was exactly what happened in India in the middle of the 19th century. The influx of ideas from without, the rule of a modern nation wedded to democratic ideals, the advent of progressive, scientific and free minds, the education imparted in a living language spoken and written by a free nation, the freedom of communication, commerce and contact, all contributed to an awakening which impelled people to think of freedom, to long for freedom and to exert themselves for its attainment.

In its basic foundations the desire for freedom was one. In its expression it differed and varied according to the tempers, mentalities, circumstances and conditions of life, of different groups that imbibed it. The earliest movement for freedom took the shape of a religious and social reform movement. But the men concerned in that movement could not help thinking politically and economically also. We have ample evidence to prove that the founders and promoters of the Brahmo Samaj did take part in politics. Their politics may have been of a kind not approved now, but it is easy to be wise after the event. What they in their time thought and did, must not be evaluated in the light of facts and circumstances which did not then exist. Even the revered Raja

Ram Mohun Roy could not help meddling with politics. It would have been strange if he could. After Ram Mohun Roy came Keshab Chandra Sen. He too had politics of his own.

After him came Swami Dayanand, an intellectual giant with a great mind, full of love and pity for his country. He started a movement which was religious and social both in conception and execution. Yet can anyone deny that both his propaganda and his movement were intensely nationalistic, and irresistibly led to dissemination of a desire for political freedom ? Could anyone prevent him from writing a chapter on politics in his work, the *Satyarth Prakash* ?[1] And could any power on earth prevent the readers of that chapter from thinking and talking of Swaraj ? How then was it possible to keep our minds and hearts closed to politics ? Why was the Government so hostile to the Arya Samaj, from the very moment of its birth ? It did not care a pin for the religious dogma of the Samaj. But it assessed it at its true value when it judged it by its inevitable logical consequences. The leaders of the Arya Samaj were actually hostile to the Indian National Congress, not because it was anti-Government, but because in their opinion its methods were unreal and faulty. The question arises, why did not the then leaders of the Arya Samaj make up with the Government? Why did they encourage independence of thought and action ? Why did they encourage Swadeshi ? Why did they lay themselves open to the suspicion of the Government by refusing a grant-in-aid for their College and by insisting on their School not being opened to the inspection of the Department ? The only answer is that they could not help doing so. Theirs was a movement of self-help and self-respect. But these demanded an attitude of aloofness from Government. They did not preach actual non-co-operation, but their mentality was all along one of non-co-operation. The Government feared, hated and discouraged the Arya Samaj more than they ever did the Indian National Congress. May I ask why ? Is it not a fact that more than once in the earlier life of the Arya Samaj, the question of winning the goodwill of the Government and co-operating with it was considered ? Is it not a fact that more than once it was decided to take active steps to do so and steps were actually taken in that direction ? But what was the result ? Men who had been nursed

on the strong milk of Swami Dayanand's teachings, found it impossible to change their mentality and habits. Senior men fretted, foamed and frowned, but the younger generation defied them. Here and there a senior changed his policy, but on the whole the topmost men could not put into practice what they preached to others. But the policy of the Government has on the whole remained unchanged because it was based on fundamental considerations. Here and there they rewarded those who had been instrumental in bringing about the change, but so far as the attitude of the Government towards communities was concerned, it did not change in the least. The Hindus in the Punjab have tried this experiment more than once. The Government is willing to use them against the non-Hindus whenever they need their support. But otherwise they are where they have been from the start.

The leaders of the Indian National Congress and the Arya Samaj have always set their faces against revolutionary tendencies, yet they failed to prevent such tendencies from being born and from spreading. Why? Because the impulse that led to them was irresistible and uncontrollable. It proves futile to say "thus far shalt thou go and no further." I maintain, therefore, that the political movement was the natural effect of causes which were beyond the control of the Hindu leaders and that every time an effort was made to stem the tide and win the goodwill of the Government, it failed because it was bound to fail. During the course of the speech I made at the last session of the Mahasabha[2] on the Hindu Sanghathan resolution, I asked the audience if they were prepared to abjure politics, confess that they had acted wrongly in piloting the national political movement and to throw themselves at the mercy of the Government, in order to win over the latter to their side, the reply was given by thundering cries of "No, No". That was the only reply which a self-respecting and intelligent community could give. It is therefore too late in the day to denounce the founders and the leaders of the Indian National Congress as people who have harmed the Hindu community by their political efforts. "But we do not want you to give up politics. We want you to change their trend," may be the retort.

II

The question that we propose to examine in this article is:

"Could the Hindus have adopted a political course different from the one they did" and also "Can they now change their politics ? If so, in what direction ?"

My answer to the first question is an emphatic 'no'. What did the Hindus find when the first rays of political consciousness dawned on them and a sense of nationalism penetrated the walls of their minds ? They found that they who formed the bulk of the population, who had inherited a civilisation which was even now the wonder of the world, who still produced intellectual giants, who were physically inferior to no race on earth, and who possessed all the qualities of a great nation were in a position of subordination to a few foreigners who had taken possession of their country and had elbowed them out of every position of profit and honour, by sheer force of superior organisation and superior skill in the use of arms. They found that in their own land, in the valleys of their rivers, under the shadows of their trees, on the tops of their hills, in the vast plains of their beautiful and fertile country, they were mere "hewers of wood and drawers of water" ; comparative strangers who were denied equal rights, equal opportunities and equal privileges by the handful of foreigners who ruled over them. They found that while the cream of all that they produced was taken away by others, only the husk and the chaff remained for their people. Let me ask in all humility, if it was in the power of any leader or any group of men, however wise, however sagacious, however far-seeing, to apply a brake to these thoughts and to prevent people from thinking in that strain. If not what was to be done ?

There were only two courses open, to seek a remedy for your wrongs, disabilities and disqualifications—a violent conflict, or a legitimate and peaceful outlet for your feelings, sentiments and aspirations. The educated leaders of the country belonging to all communities and religions, chose the latter course, and in my judgment, wisely. They came to the conclusion that with the diversity of race, religion, language and culture that prevailed, a rising of force was impossible to succeed. Yet it was equally impossible to still the voice of self-respect and freedom that had been born. The Muslims at that time lacked in that kind of political consciousness which arises from contact with living free nations and their literature. They might have joined in a revolt but they

were not sufficiently educated in *modern* ways to join a modern movement for democratic institutions. When they awakened to a sense of their backwardness, their awakening was accompanied by a shock which drove them to sectarianism and communalism. I maintain that all this was perfectly natural and inevitable. The Hindu leaders did not act wrongly in starting the political movement ; nor in agitating for their rights, but in under-estimating the forces of opposition and obstruction that were inherent in the conditions of life prevalent in the country they were rather mistaken. A political movement was inevitable. Moreover, it could only take the shape it did because it could not from the very nature of things take any other form. Can any one suggest that it should have taken a pro-Government form ? Pro-Government movements and tendencies are only a consequence of anti-Government tendencies. Corporate loyalty is out of place and has no market value unless there is disloyalty or at least the appearance of disloyalty in the field. There is no occasion nor demand for loyalty unless the reverse puts in an appearance. The educated Hindu leaders of the eighties of the last century could not have started a movement for loyalty because it was not wanted and consequently did not pay. Of course, sycophancy and subservience does always appear to be paying, but only in individual cases and for a time. Communities cannot play that role unless there are other communities which play the reverse role. Even then these "virtues" do not vitalise in the long run, as they do not command respect.

It is therefore childish for people to chide the Hindu political leaders for having harmed the Hindu community by starting the movement for freedom. Having once started, could they go back ? I am not at all sorry that they started on that road. It shall always stand to their credit and glory that they did so. What they can be criticised about, was their attitude towards Muslims. It was laudable on their part to make all possible efforts to win over the Muslim intelligentsia to their side, even if they had to make some sacrifices. But in my judgment it was wrong (a) to pretend that the Muslim intelligentsia was with them, (b) to make the sacrifice of a principle which went to the root of the whole idea of nationhood. It happens that having made one mistake, one tries to cover that mistake with other mistakes. That is

the only charge which can with a certain amount of truth be laid at the door of the Hindu Congress leaders.

Now as regards the future. Is it possible for the Hindu political leaders to discontinue their political activities either temporarily or permanently? Is it desirable that they should do so? My answer to both these questions is an emphatic 'no'. In my judgment, an attempt to do so will be more harmful than otherwise. They will lose in the estimation of the ruling race, to win whose favour they are advised to follow that policy. The British can possibly have no respect for people who display such a deplorable lack of grit, perseverance and doggedness in their pursuits. It will be the most conclusive proof of their unfitness for Swaraj. It will be the most crushing confession of guilt with respect to the charges that are levelled against Hindu character. It will be a disastrous set-back to the Hindu revival. But is it even reasonably certain that a change of policy will be beneficial to the Hindu community? There are some good people who labour under the delusion that they have only to fall at the feet of the bureaucracy in order to win them over to the side of the Hindu community. They forget that the English are the last people who give up the battle for freedom so light-heartedly. There are no such words as mercy and pity in the political lexicon of the Western people. One falls at the feet of the English imperialist only to receive kicks.

The second delusion from which they suffer is that if they could only succeed in securing some high offices for themselves or for their compatriots, everything would go well with the Hindu community.

I do not ascribe any motives to them and I have no hesitation in admitting that Hindus holding high offices can certainly do some good to their community, if they wish. They can at least prevent or check injustice, but my experience in this respect is very bitter. I have no reason to think that if they had the opportunities of a Fazl-i-Husain[3], they would have behaved as he did. First, because they are constitutionally and traditionally unfit for that role. Secondly, they forget that Sir Fazl-i-Husain had some circumstances in his favour which a Hindu Minister could not and cannot command. Thirdly, they ignore that in this respect the policy of the Government is a fixed and permanent one. In

smaller matters, it may change. Individual statesmen may slightly alter it but in its essence and essentials, it shall never change. It is not to the interests of the British Government to see the Hindus grow stronger, more united and more powerful. They may prefer to play off one community against the other, but any hopes of the Government making a radical change in their Hindu-Muslim policy are bound to be dashed to pieces. Muslims are virile, the Hindus are better educated and more up-to-date in all the paraphernalia of modern life. A foreign bureaucracy has to fear the latter more than the former. A virile people can fight and make things unpleasant. An accomplished and educated community like the Hindus can cause substantial economic loss. The Muslims may be formidable foes on the military field. The Hindus are everyday opponents in the field of economic life. It is obvious that if the Government were to withdraw all favours and preferences from the Muslims, as the Hindus desire, the latter will get stronger and more powerful. No foreign bureaucracy, much less one governed by commercial considerations, can tolerate that. This may be an unpleasant fact. But it is the plain truth. The Hindus must be prepared to fight their battles with their own resources and on their strength. They will be soon disillusioned and deplorably shocked if they build on Government favours. The cry for a change in political tactics is a cry for running after a mirage. I do not want the Hindus to live in a land of unpractical idealism, but at the same time I do not want them to run after a mirage. Let them face the facts and manfully meet them.

III

It is worthwhile to note that the Hindu opposition to nationalist political activities is mainly confined to provinces where the Hindus are in a minority. Do these minorities desire that in their interests foreign rule should be perpetuated and political progress checked? Do they think that their salvation lies in perpetual *raj* by the British? We hope the Hindus are not so lost to a sense of honour and self-respect as to wish that. Well then, do they think that a time will come when they will be so strong and powerful as to defy the combined forces of the British and the Muslims? This is more in the realm of dreams than in that of reality or even probability. What then is the course which the Hindus should adopt? In my judgment the Hindus should continue to be in the forefront

of the political movement though they should never lose sight of the realities and should not build on mere assumptions. The political movement should not be slackened but the social movement should be accelerated.

It is an established phenomenon of Indian national life that, generally speaking, men who are slow to recognise the need of rapid social advance are the class of people who oppose political activities and wish to repose on the bosom of bureaucratic favours and smiles. Just as the impulse for freedom is one, so the impulse for "no changism" and "let things as they are" is also unitary. Reliance on authority and reluctance to change and take risks is the mentality behind both (of course there are exceptions to the rule). It affects religious, social and political activities almost equally. The proper course for the Hindus then is to carry on incessant, effective and ever-progressing war against the iniquities of the prevailing caste system and to leave no means unemployed by which they can break down the social barriers between caste and caste and their accompanying influences, They should do everything possible to improve the physique of the community, and its moral tone.

The Hindus are inferior to none in moral impulses. The spirit of self-sacrifice and self-abnegation for higher purposes of life is there. The trouble is that it is confined to individuals. What is needed is its general diffusion among the classes and the masses. In my judgment it is a lack of desirable social morality which makes people too calculating. A spirit of bold-enterprise and risky adventures is necessary for a healthy communal tone. This is lacking among the Hindus. Special efforts should be made to cultivate and encourage it. A movement to stop and discourage political activity is doomed to fail, but a movement for social amelioration and social self-help is bound to succeed. Let us then fully realize the realities of the situation and adjust our movement accordingly. More stress should be laid on the fight within, than on the fight without; though there should be no shirking the latter whenever it becomes necessary. The habit of taking things lying down, and of looking upon everything as an investment, of calculating profit and loss to annas and pies in regard to every move, must be given up. There are certain things which stand far higher than profit and loss. Honour, self-respect, dignity, forming

part of *Dharma* are among these.

The Hindus have maintained their communal individuality for so long and under such trying circumstances that one is justified in presuming the existence of all these traits in them. Without them they would not have survived all the attacks hurled at them and at their culture from so many directions. But it is necessary to remind them occasionally that decline in these traits will be fatal. This is my last word on the subject. I yield to none in love for my community, and in solicitude for its strength and welfare. I adore Hindu culture. I shall, at all times be prepared, not only to serve the Hindus but to sacrifice all that is near and dear to me if such a sacrifice may be necessary for its protection from dangers. But I shall not be a party to any policy of humiliation and subservience. I do not want the Hindus to be subservient to the non-Hindus be they Muslims or Europeans. I want them to continue the fight for liberty even under a sense of sole responsibility.

26. LABOUR IN THE EAST

In one brief sentence I want to associate myself fully and wholeheartedly with the compliments that have been paid to the work of the International Labour Office, the Director and his staff, for the valuable Report they have presented to us. The Report contains much useful and illuminating matter ; that is, so far as it goes, very good but the point I would like to emphasise is the importance which, in my judgment, the International Labour Office should attach to investigating conditions of labour in the Orient and in the coloured world of Africa and America. As matters at present stand, it is unfortunate that about one thousand millions or even more members of the human race, should be represented at this Conference by less than a dozen people, I mean the two Delegates from India and the Delegates of Japan. We all know that the population of Asia and Africa far exceeds that of Europe, and I wonder if the white workers of Europe and America properly realise the significance of the problem which faces them. After a hard struggle, extending over several years, they have secured certain privileges in the conditions of their labour from their employers and from their Governments and, unless they take care to improve the conditions of labour in Asia and Africa, I am afraid that the privileges they have secured and the advantages they have gained may be lost altogether, by their employers transferring their activities to Asia and Africa and taking advantage of the conditions of labour that prevail in those countries. I would, therefore, beg of them to take greater interest in the conditions of labour that prevail in those countries. We in the Orient are trying our best to improve the conditions of labour in countries where it is possible to do so, but even in those

Full text of the speech delivered by Lajpat Rai on the Director's Report presented to the Eighth International Labour Conference, Geneva, on 2 June 1926, Lajpat Rai attended the Conference as the accredited representative of the Indian workers.

countries we are face to face with great difficulties.

First of all the governments are not, of course, very enthusiastic about legislation to improve the conditions of labour, because you know that the governments have a particular knack of being adverse to changes—changes, particularly, which take away a certain part of the authority and power of their chief clients, the capitalists or employers. Therefore, sometimes the governments are in the habit of opposing legislation to improve labour conditions by the hackneyed phrase or plea of backward conditions and a backward educational situation. There is sometimes some force in this plea, but we, the representatives of the workers, cannot allow governments to take shelter behind that plea *ad infinitum* ; we cannot allow them to make a fetish of it. No doubt sometimes special circumstances and special industries do require consideration ; but the considerations of humanity and the considerations of the welfare of the workers must supersede the considerations of power which may be gained by injustice. We, therefore, require the full sympathy and the full co-operation of the workers of the West in the struggle that we have to carry on in the East, to improve conditions of labour in Eastern countries. You know very well that, particularly in those countries which have not self-government, and which are under the mandate or government of foreign people, the conditions of labour among the native population and among the coloured people do require special attention. We do not, of course, wish it to appear that we claim the right to dictate terms to any State, because every State is master in its own house, and every State can regulate its affairs as it likes ; but what we are attempting at in this Conference is the creation of an international atmosphere, bringing facts to light, and letting the moral conscience of the world bring about, what moral pressure it can, on those countries where the conditions of labour are neither good nor desirable nor proper. That is all we can do. Let there be no misunderstanding. Nobody, so far as I know, tries in this Conference to dictate terms to any State, or to point the finger of scorn at any State for having done what he considers it was its duty to do.

All that we are attempting to do is to throw the light of publicity upon the conditions of life existing in those countries where self-government does not prevail, or where the conditions of labour are not such as we would like them to be ; that is all. The object of

this Conference is to bring together, in a friendly spirit, the peoples of the world and the representatives of the different countries and different peoples on this platform, so that they can exchange their thoughts in private and in public, and thereby create a public opinion which will afterwards have its effect upon the peoples throughout the different parts of the world. That is all we are meeting here to do ; and let there be no misunderstanding about it. If there is any-one who wants to point out the particular facts and conditions which exist in a particular country, it is not from any desire on his part to discredit the Government or the State to which he is referring, but it is simply done to illustrate what he means : he is simply pointing out the difficulties in which he or his nation is placed. I would desire the International Labour Office, in that connection, to note that the interests of organised labour in Europe and America require that the conditions of labour in the Eastern countries and in countries where there is a foreign government should at least be brought before the bar of public opinion. When I say that, what I have particularly in mind are those countries where the governments are foreign or where the governments have Mandates. It is necessary that international public opinion should know what is going on in those countries. The conditions of labour in certain parts of the British Empire, for instance, in Fiji, in Kenya and in South Africa, require publicity. I bring no accusation against them. All I am aiming at, at present, is that the International Labour Office should collect all the information that is possible to collect with regard to the conditions of labour in those countries and that it should place that information in its reports, so that the rest of the world may know what the conditions of labour in those countries are.

We have lately heard of certain Bills having been introduced into the Parliament of South Africa. One of those Bills affects Asiatics and another affects both the native population of South Africa and the Asiatics.[1] Now I do not want to say at this stage a word about those Bills or that legislation because at the moment there are certain negotiations going on between the Government of India and the Government of the Union of South Africa, and there is a hope of a satisfactory settlement of the Indian question being reached. For that reason I do not want to say a word which might in any way embarrass those Governments or those who are negotiating. But so far as the Colour Bill[2] is concerned there are different

reports about it. The other day I read in the *Daily Mail* that about five and a half million people, natives of that country, had been debarred from joining certain industries and from becoming skilled artisans. The article was published in last Saturday's edition of the *Daily Mail*, and I do not want to do anything further than to call your attention to the facts which are therein set out. I have not made a study of the Bill and I take no responsibility for those statements. All I do say is that the conditions require investigation, and that is all that I am asking the International Labour Office to do.

Now coming to the conditions in India, which I know more intimately, I want to inform all those present here that we in India are not proceeding with the improvement of the conditions of labour, or with legislation to that end, with that rapidity which we should like the Government of India to adopt. The Government of India, like all other governments, does not want to change quickly and it sometimes brings forward the old time-honoured pleas of backward education and backward industrial conditions. But we are determined that the Government of India should adopt a greater speed, and we will do all that is in our power to force the Government of India to legislate in such a way as to improve the conditions of labour in India more rapidly than it is doing at present. In that connection we might say that so far as the competition between India and Japan is concerned, the employers' case was put forward very ably yesterday by the Employers' Delegate[3]. That was his point of view. The workers' point of view was also put before this Conference last year by the Workers' Delegate[4]. I would start from a different point of view altogether. My point is this : We appreciate the difficulties of Japan, particularly the difficulties in industrial competition. We have absolutely no right to dictate to Japan what she should do. There is nothing binding upon Japan unless she ratifies the Conventions that were adopted with the consent of her own Delegates who were present at the Washington Conference. It is for them to decide when they will make their own laws. But what we want to do is to point out to them our difficulties in India as regards the industrial situation created by their failure to ratify the Washington Convention of 1919. The mill-owners' point of view was pointed out to you yesterday. The labour people also find themselves in a great difficulty on account of Japan's failure to ratify that Convention, because the champions of labour improvement cannot

put forward their claims so forcibly as they could otherwise do, in face of the fact that the most progressive Asiatic nation still sticks to old conditions. I would appeal to Japan, not so much in the interests of its industries (because it has every right to look after its industries), as in that of humanity. A very large number of people in India put forward the interests of women and the mothers of the race on a higher level than the interests of industries. Future generations in India and Japan and in every other country are dependent upon the mothers, and if we force the mothers to work underground, we are certainly not improving the future prospects of the race. Therefore, in India we are trying to prohibit women and children working underground at all. As you were told yesterday, the Government has already prevented women and children working at night, but we propose to go a step further and to put an absolute stop to the working of women and children underground. I think that will be a great step forward; but we shall be greately handicapped in taking that step unless Japan takes a similar step in her own country, by introducing legislation. I am sure that the Workers' Delegates of Japan realise the value of this legislation in their own country, and they can speak for themselves. Last year the Workers' Delegate from Japan raised his voice, and a member of the Japanese Parliament asked certain questions of his Government in the Imperial Diet, why certain abuses had not been abolished and why the Factory Act of 1923 had not been put into force, and certain replies were given by the Government. It is for the Government of Japan to do what is needful, and I will not say anything further. But there is one more ground upon which I want to base my appeal to Japan. After all, what is done in India more or less goes to the credit of the British Government. Indià is not a self-governing country and the Indian Executive Government is not responsible to Indian legislature. Therefore the credit of Labour Legislation belongs to the British people and the British Government. Japan is the only progressive Asiatic country in the Orient which can vindicate the honour of the East and the Orient. I appeal to Japan not to lag behind other countries in this respect and to show that in their desire to make money out of their industries, they have not forgotten their own ideals. I appeal to them, not only in the name of humanity, but in the name of the fame and reputation of the Orient and for the sake of interests of human race, and I hope, and I am confident, that Japan will listen to that appeal now or in the

immediate future.

Having disposed of that, I just want to say a few words about the conditions of forced labour in India. We are not prepared to conceal the skeleton in our own cupboard. India is divided into two parts : British India and Native India, comprised in what are known as the Native States which are governed by native rulers. Now, conditions of forced labour exist in both parts, in British India as well as in Native India. Of course, they are not universal. In British India they have no legal sanction behind them except for certain purposes or on certain occasions ; but there is a trend of pseudo-legal sanction behind them and sometimes Government officials take shelter behind what is known as customary sanction. I should be unfair to the British Government if I omitted to say that certain Provincial Governments have tried to abolish the custom altogether by certain Orders ; but those Orders have not been obeyed in some cases, and for very good reasons. The practice is very useful and handy for officials. Therefore, I cannot accept the plea that the Government cannot force their hands and make them comply with its rules. If it can enforce its other laws, orders and regulations, it can certainly enforce these also if it is enthusiastic about it, and I hope it will do so, because public opinion is expressing itself very forcibly.

With regard to the conditions of forced labour in Native India, governed by native rulers, I may say that there also it is not universal, although it prevails to a greater extent and over a larger area. The obligations of the Government of India are not so well defined as in their own territory ; but there are certain ways in which the Government of India and also the League of Nations can bring pressure to bear upon the native rulers of India to abolish forced labour, which is after all only a form of slavery. Every year a representative of the native rulers of India comes here to attend the meeting of the League of Nations, and I think that just a hint from the officials of the League of Nations would suffice to point out to him that he should take the first step to prevail upon his fellow Princes to abolish this kind of labour in their territories. The Government officials of India could also set an example by refusing the forced labour that is sometimes supplied to them for their convenience. In and near Simla, the summer capital of India, a good deal of forced labour is supplied for the convenience and comfort of

British officials and European and Indian tourists, That practice should be stopped, and it can be stopped by the moral pressure of the Government of India on its own high Government officials.

I do not want to take up any more of your time, but I just want to say one word in conclusion. The workers of the East look to you for co-operation and sympathy, They offer you their friendship and co-operation in your work, and they expect from you the same kind of co-operation and sympathy. It is for you to accept their offer in the spirit in which it is made ; but I also wish to say that if you leave entirely neglected the interests of coloured populations of India and Africa, you are creating a situation, the eventual consequences of which I shudder to think of. You must carry the whole world with you, as far as it is possible to do so, and not leave any part of it or conditions of labour anywhere unregulated and unlooked after. This is my last word to you, and I say it in all friendliness and goodwill and sympathy.

27. DIFFERENCES WITH THE SWARAJ PARTY

IT GAVE me no pleasure to sever my connection with the Swaraj Party,[1] specially after all that I had done to strengthen and solidify the party in spite of my non-agreement with its leaders on more than one important point. I was released from jail in August 1923. The Swaraj Party had already been formed at Gaya in December 1922. In September was held the special session of the Congress at Delhi to consider the question of council-entry. From my sick bed at Solan I did all I could to support the cause of Deshbandhu and Pandit Motilal, viz., to get the permission of the Congress to contest the elections. Shortly after that came the elections and although I did not agree with the election slogan of the Swaraj Party, i.e., uniform, continuous and consistent obstruction, I did all I could to help them in the election. Practically single-handed I ran the elections for them in the Punjab and obtained notable victories. After the elections, when the Assembly met in Delhi, I stayed for days and days together to help them in their efforts to establish a united nationalist party and actually canvassed votes for them there. Later on when I went to England I conducted negotiations on their behalf with the Labour Government[2] and throughout that trip espoused their cause and explained their position, although I was not a member of the party and had not accepted its programme of obstruction.

My first difference with the Swaraj Party, came in relation to the Hindu-Muslim Pact of Bengal propounded by the late Mr. Das.[3] I do not now propose to revive that controversy, but t

Speech delivered by Lala Lajpat Rai on 25 September 1926 at an election meeting held at Lucknow under the chairmanship of Raja Sir Rampal Singh. Lajpat Rai had resigned from the Swaraj Party a month earlier and along with Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya founded the Nationalist Party to contest 1926 elections in opposition to the Swaraj Party. Reproduced from the *Tribune* of 30 September 1926.

would be well to remind you that the propounding of that pact was an act of gross indiscipline on the part of the Bengal Swarajist leaders. The special congress in Calcutta had oppointed a sub-committee consisting of Dr. Ansari and myself to draw a national pact. We had drawn a pact with the advice and consent of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, and the leaders of the Swaraj Party knew of that pact. Yet the Bengal pact was propounded before the other proposed national pact drafted by us was published. Aftet my return from Europe, my differences with the leaders of the Swaraj Party grew both in volume and in kind. At Belgaum these differences assumed a rather acute shape, but still I entertained hope that I might be able to co-operate with Pandit Motilal Nehru at least, if not with Deshbandhu Das. After the much-lamented death of Deshbandhu Das[4] I appealed to the country once more to forget their differences and to rally round the banner of the Swaraj Party. I could not do so myself, as there were some points of principles on which I could not see eye to eye with the leaders of the Swaraj Party. After all, I joined the Swaraj Party in January, 1926, after having made my position clear in the letter that I addressed at the time to Pandit Motilal Nehru. That letter has been made public and I need only remind you that I distinctly said in that letter that I believed in the Council work and was opposed to wholesale obstruction and to boycott of Councils. I joined the Swaraj Party in the hope that I would be able to pull on with them, but soon ofter I found that I was mistaken. On my return from England this year, I found the situation so hopeless that I considered I could no longer remain in the party. I would have gladly withdrawn from any kind of contest with the Swaraj Party had my sense of duty to the country allowed me to do so. I feel that such a conduct at the present juncture would be cowardly. I owe it to myself and the country to vindicate the principles for what I stand. What are those principles ? I will try to restate them as briefly as possible.

Non-co-operation or wholesale obstruction has for the present been frustrated on account of the Muslim community. It could only be practicable if the country supported it unitedly. The Muslims never supported the movement whole-heartedly, and whatever support these principles received from a section of the Muslim community has for the present vanished. In the circumstances the policy of non-co-operation or obstruction by one community only,

has no chance of success. The leaders of the Muslim community claim certain rights for their community, the acceptance of which will reduce the Hindu community to a position of subordination, if not immediately, at least in the future. In my judgment it is not in the interests of the country at large that the Hindus should accept those claims. In the circumstances, the Muslims have allied themselves with the Government. I do not charge them with treachery or lack of love for their country. I think we may safely presume that they are as patriotic as we are. But they cannot let their patriotism override their concern for the future status of the community in the country. In their love for their religion and their community they are unable to see the injustice or the incongruity of their claims. They are determined to have the whole loaf either by agreement with the Hindus or by alliance with the Government. They find that co-operation with the Government gives them better chance of success than co-operation with the Hindus. Consequently they have thrown their lot with the Government and the Government is trying its level best to satisfy them in every possible way. The joint strategy of the Government and the Muslims only lead to the isolation of the Hindus. The Hindus have divided themselves into several classes and are by no means united on a common platform. There are some good men amongst the Hindus who think that the reconversion of the whole Muslim community and the establishment of an all-pervailing, all-absorbing Hindu policy is not only desirable but feasible. Swami Satyadeo, the newest ally of the Swaraj Party, is one of those good men. To my mind that policy is impossible. Then there is the Swaraj Party, consisting mostly of Hindus, whose leader maintains that he is constitutionally unfit to think communally, which means that he can only think non-communally. There is a third party to which I have the honour to belong, and who think that nationalism is not inconsistent with justice to Hindu community and that unity cannot be purchased at the cost of Hindu rights.

What then should the Hindus do? Should they throw themselves into the arms of the bureaucracy and enter into a counter-alliance with the Government? I would be the last person to suggest or to advocate such a step. The solution of the situation is by no means easy and simple, but the remedy, in my judgment, lies this way. The first thing that the Hindus should do, is to abandon at least for the time being the mentality that led to non-co-operation

or wholesale obstruction in the legislatures. Going into the legislatures with the mentality of non-co-operation is not only futile but harmful. In actual practice the Swarai Party has not been following a policy of wholesale obstruction. They have several times voted with the Government. There was a time when membership of committees and elected offices were tabooed. Then came the gradual acceptance of those places. The last speech the late Deshbandhu Das gave on the question of co-operation with the Government was the one made at Faridpur.[5] Thus the policy of the last three years had been one of climbing down step by step. A walk-out again was an exhibition of the old mentality of non-co-operation. The truth is that we cannot play loose and fast with the legislature. One may not fully co-operate with the Government, in fact no Indian patriot can do so, but if one allows himself to be influenced by the mentality of boycott he is sure to fall into ways and methods that may spell disaster to the country in general, and the Hindus in particular. The Swaraj Party consists of many Hindus and so does the Congress. At the present moment, in the words of Pandit Motilal Nehru, there is only a sprinkling of Muslims in the Congress. The great bulk of the Muslim community are whole-hearted co-operators. The question that troubles me is this. What would be the position of the Hindus after 10 or 20 years hereafter if the present alliance of the Government and the Muslims continues and the Hindus continue to allow themselves to be influenced by the mentality of co-operation and boycott? In my judgment there will be only one result of this policy, viz., that the Hindus will come to occupy a position of inferiority and subordination. The Swaraj leaders are not troubled by that contingency, but I and men of my thinking cannot but be disturbed by a prospect of that kind. I do not want the Hindus to return such people to the Councils as are advocates of the idea of Hindu Raj or are in favour of a counter-alliance with the Government. What I desire the Hindu electorates to do is to send genuine nationalists, stern patriots and firm Hindus who will not compromise in such a way or yield to such an extent as to endanger the position of the Hindu community.

Let me point out by way of illustration to them the position that the Hindus of the Punjab and the United Provinces occupy in the local and municipal administration of those two provinces. In the Punjab the Hindus are in a small minority and they naturally

occupy a position of inferiority, as compared with the Muslims, regardless of their economic and educational status. In the United Provinces they are in an overwhelming majority, but their position is not so good as that of the bare majority of the Muslims in the Punjab. In most places the Muslim minority has been accorded a position of equality with the Hindu majority, while in the Punjab the Hindu minority is always a minority. This is a spectacle which might satisfy some nationalists, but it does not satisfy me. And if the Hindus are not careful in electing their representatives to the Councils and the Assembly the position which they will come to occupy in the future polity of India will be similar. I have been an extremist and almost revolutionary in politics all mv life ever since I reached the year of probation. When I say that the time has come for the Hindus to change their mentality I speak with the voice of experience. My detractors say or insinuate that the Government has won me over. This is an unadulterated lie and an absolutely mendacious concoction. There can never be any understanding of a compromising nature between me and the Government. I am, I have been, and I shall remain to my last breath an uncompromising opponent of a foreign Government, but I think I shall be failing in my duty to my conutry and to my community if I do not place before them the views which I have come to hold after about 30 years of troubled life. I want freedom for my country, but I must be sure that I get that freedom without losing my status as a Hindu. I do not want to change masters.

Hindu young men, search your conscience, look around you, examine your position and then see if my fears and apprehensions on your behalf are the creation of my imagination or are founded on commonsense. Hindus ! sentimentality, over-generousness, or too much regard for logic have been the bane of your community. Bravery to the extent of stupidity has been your curse. I do not want you to be mere calculators of losses and gains, but I do want you to combine the policy of discriminate wisdom and state-craft with the spirit of a Rajput. Bravery in the fields of battle and wisdom, prudence and state-craft in the council chamber are the qualities which are required if you want to survive and continue a life of self-respect. Boasting and bluffing will not pay. It will not save you. It may lead you to ruin and destruction. Be always prepared to suffer for right and justice, religion and community, country and nation. But for God's

sake do not misinterpret boasting and bluffing for bravery. We are not in a position to threaten. It is no good over-estimating our power and misleading our people. What we require is the cultivation of a spirit of balanced judgment, balanced independence and a reasoned policy. Do not be carried away by mere catch words and slogans. I honestly believe that the Swaraj Party, with its traditions and mentality is, incapable of exercising a balanced judgment. They have driven away from their midst many of those who are in favour of a balanced line of policy and a balanced line of action. Their present attitude of stubborn vanity gives no hope of doing better in the future. In the circumstances it is the duty, and a sacred duty, to cripple their power for mischief. The judgment of the U.P. Hindus will decide this issue and I hope they will not give a faltering judgment.

I stand for the policy of strong and real nationalism consistent with the just claims of every community and a mentality which will refuse to barter the honour of the country and the community for a mess of pottage either by favours from the Government or for favours from other sister communities. The next three years are very important in the life of the nation. They will determine our future. We cannot afford to be indifferent or foolish or uncompromising. Right compromise at the right moment is the soul of politics. We have thrown away several opportunities of a good compromise. Let us not make a free estimate of our capacity. We want nothing but justice and right. We shall refuse to be dominated or dictated by others. Pandit Motilal and his party lay great stress on discipline, but what is discipline ? Is it an end in itself or only one of the means to an end. Shall we make a fetish of it and worship it even at the cost of the end ? If we do so we know what will happen to us. The Swaraj Party acted instinctively rightly when they abandoned the triple boycott in favour of the Council entry. They acted rightly when they decided to accept membership of committees and presidentship of Councils. In the name of discipline the Swaraj Party has lopped off and amputated their healthy limbs, limbs that stood with them in storms and stress. Yet, the Swaraj Party is sufficiently powerful today to cut off these limbs and adopt as their allies men whose past record is anything but satisfactory. In one place the Swaraj Party has adopted as one of their candidates a man who, by his own confession, has been a spy of the Government

for some time. It may be that his repentences are sincere and he is a staunch patriot now, but who knows ? Why must we send him to the legislature ? There are others adopted as candidates by the Swaraj Party, whose record should be a warning.

In their desire to increase numbers they are throwing away all discretion and principles to the winds. You might say everything is fair in war and love, but is that principle right ? Is it moral ?

Do you think victory won by such means will last and will win for you an admission to the temple of freedom ? (A voice : Other parties are doing the same). I know what your reply is. You say the other parties are doing the same. Let us grant that they are doing, but is that a sufficient reply ? Dear friends, only righteousness exalteth a nation. In my judgment all the leaders who are following such a policy are doing a great wrong to the country for which they shall be sorry in the hour of their trial. For the sake of untried men, wealthy or influential, we are throwing away to the wolves tried compatriots, experienced soldiers and seasoned captains. Is that political wisdom ? Is it statesmanship ? If you are strictly uncompromising, try to make yourself extremely careful in selecting your future leaders. Let there be only a few, but let them be tried and absolutely reliable men. Your strength will lie in their ability, their integrity, and not in mere numbers. I give this humble advice to the leaders of all the parties in a spirit of great humility. A man cannot suddenly change his colour and wash away all his antecedents. A fall is easy, but to rise is difficult.

28. DEMAND FOR RELEASE OF POLITICAL DETENUES

THE FACT OF the matter is that this is a subject upon which the Government of India and the European community residing in India or doing business in India, on one side, and the people of this country, on the other hold diametrically opposite opinions. There is practical unanimity on this question between the two sections *inter se.* The Government of India believe that they are justified in taking steps by which a number of the best citizens of Bengal are kept in jails without trial. And the people of India think that that is an outrage on their fundamental rights and they must do everything they can to have that policy reversed. (Hear, hear.)

This subject, as was pointed out by the last speaker[1], has been thrashed out by the previous Assembly and not much is left to be said that is new.[2] The Honourable the Home Member practically

Speech delivered by Lajpat Rai in the Central Legislative Assembly on 3 February 1927 on the resolution demanding the release of Bengal detenues. The original resolution moved by Varahagiri Venkata Jogiah read :

"This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council :

(a) the repeal of the Bengal Regulation III of 1818 and similar regulations in force in other Provinces of India, and urges upon him the bare justice of an immediate release of all political detenues or of giving them at least an opportunity of exculpating themselves and proving themselves to be altogether innocent of the charges, if any, levelled against them, and

(b) the grant of an amnesty to all political prisoners now undergoing imprisonment."

Pandit Motilal Nehru moved the following amendment which was accepted by the Assembly.

"That for the original Resolution the following be substituted :

This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council that he be pleased to immediately release or bring to trial all detenues under old Regulations and the Bengal Criminal Law (Amendment) Act of 1925."

repeated every word of what he had said before.[3] There is very little new information which he has given to us; and so I am not going to take up the time of the House by making a long speech. But I want to make one thing clear and that is that this is a question upon which all-India thinks alike; there is absolutely no difference of opinion between the different political parties of the Indian community. (A Voice: "There is.") Yes, there is that section who call themselves the defenders of the liberties of this country after having taken possession of it illegally. There is a difference there. There is certainly a difference between those people who possess India and those who do not want them to possess India as they have done so far. The ruling classes of India who are not of India, do certainly think differently from the people of India and they occupy the Benches opposite from where the voice came. Frankly, it does not come well from the mouths of Members occupying those Benches to call themselves the "defenders of liberty." Defenders of liberty indeed! For people who came into forcible possession of a country, who exploit it in their own interests and who keep the people of that country under lock and key without a trial, for them to call themselves "defenders of liberty" is a travesty of language. They call themselves the defenders of liberty and they talk, as the gentleman who has just preceded me talked, as if these steps are taken in order to prevent the country from going into chaos. Why the very fact of the existence of Regulation III of 1818, and similar Regulations, and the fact that Government takes action under those Regulations so often and thinks it is justified in taking action under these laws, is presumptive evidence of the existence of chaos in this country, chaos in the name of law. (Hear, hear!) The existence of these laws and the action which the Government takes upon these laws is presumptive evidence, I say, of the fact that this country is not being governed on the same principles as other civilised countries are. I confess we are divided, the Government on one side and the country on the other side. There is no denying that fact, there is no getting out of that. We want our liberties and the Government is trying to keep us out of those liberties as long as it possibly can. That is the struggle. Well, that being the struggle the question was asked why do we want to make a show of this every season. The Honourable Member said it was a "playing". I want to tell my Honourable friend and the rest of the House why we repeat this performance from session to session. I may tell you first that

this "show", this "playing" or whatever you like to call it, will be repeated from year to year until justice is done and the grievance redressed. We shall not shrink from doing our duty by any amount of rhetoric or threats from the other side. It is a primary duty which we owe to our people and I will tell the Honourable Member very frankly the way I look at it. I do not expect those Benches to give way to us. Resolutions have been passed in the last session and in the previous sessions. The Government does not care a pin-head for them ; and if today's Resolution is passed, as I hope it will be passed by a large majority, the Government will throw it into the wastepaper basket again. It may reasonably be asked why then we repeat this thing every year. Because we want to expose the hollowness of the claim that this country is being governed by a civilised Government and has the consent of the people behind it. We want to show that this Government has not the consent of the people behind it in all these proceedings to which it resorts in the name of law and order. I do not admit that the Government alone are responsible for maintaining law and order in this country. If this country were normally governed, the people would be more interested than even the Government in maintaining law and order because it would be to their interest, to the interest of their safety and the security of their property, to maintain law and order. But as it is there is a conflict of interests. The Government think we are wrong and we think the Government are wrong. The Government believe they are more interested in maintaining law and order than we are. The Home Member has given you a long list of facts. If we were allowed to do so we could produce a longer list of atrocities on the other side.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman : Will the Honourble Member produce them ?

Lala Lajpat Rai : Oh, we produce them everyday. There are volumes full of them (A Swarajist Member : "And this") and this and many other things done everyday almost. (Swarajist Members : "What about the Moplahs ?" "And Jallianwala Bagh ?") The real thing is that we look at these things from two different points of view. We have to do this in the interest of our country. In this matter we cannot give way to the other side. But we ask the Government, "is this the way to ask us for co-operation ? Is this the way to tell us that the Government of this country rules India

in the interests of India and is the best friend of India?" That is not the way. Let us see what happens in other countries of the world. I will assume that there are revolutionary conspiracies in this conntry. There have been in all countries ; and I will challenge anybody to point out to me any one country on the face of the globe, however civilised it may be, where there are not lots of conspiracies existing. But no country and no Government dares introduce such a law unless it be in a time of war and unless there be a danger of a disturbance of public tranquillity on a very large scale. In that case one can understand that there was some justification for the Government to introduce a law of this kind or take action of this kind. But in times of ordinary peace, may I ask if this is ever done in any civilised country ? May I ask my Honourable friends if they have not heard of a movement called the I.W.W. or of a movement called the Ku Klux Klan in the United States and of the numerous lynchings that go on there; and in spite of the variety of their population, have the United States ever tried to introduce a law of this kind and put people behind bars under the process of administrative action? Administrative action indeed ! Administration of a country must be conducted according to the ordinary laws of the land in the best interests of the country. These things are bound to happen in every country. They do happen in other countries. But the difference is this : when these things happen in countries which have the boon of self-government, they are looked at from a different point of view ; they have to be tolerated and they have to be dealt with under the ordinary law of the land. But when they happen or are suspected to be happening in a country which is under foreign domination, then of course they are looked at from a different point of view. Why do you not confess frankly that you do these things because you believe we have no power to stop you from doing this ? But you are not willing to say that, although you show it in your actions. You have the entire resources of your empire behind you and we are practically impotent. So all these resolutions that we pass every year are to prove to the world the absolute impotency of what is called the Indian Legislature. The Indian Legislature, consisting of a majority of elected members, elected on a limited franchise, wants to say from the housetops that the Government of the country is not being run on sound lines. And that is really what we are here for. We do not expect any relief ; we do not expect any acceptance of our views ; we do not expect any compliance with our wishes. What

we want to prove year after year, month after month in this House is that the pretence of holding this country by the consent of the governed and the pretence that the Government is in any way a civilised Government is a mere hollow sham. The question is a very simple one. There is no war ; there is no disturbance of the public peace just now ; there is no trouble. You admit these are times of peace ; you also admit there is at present an atmosphere of peace all around ; why then continue to enforce these lawless laws which even according to your statement are meant for periods of emergency ? You are not sufficiently convinced that normal conditions have been restored and I am afraid you will never be sufficiently convinced because these things will continue to happen. We are in a vicious circle. When outrages do happen you require this law to be enforced ; and when outrages do not happen you say the Ordinance was put into force and it has produced peace. (Laughter !) Action of this kind will perhaps produce more outrages. However much you may deprive individuals of their liberty, however much you may dislike it, you cannot entirely eliminate conspiracies from existence in a big country like India. You say yourself that India is a sub-continent. Well, what is the percentage of these outrages to the total population ? If you compare the statistics of crime in the United States, in France, in Germany, even in Great Britain sometimes, you will find that the percentage here is so small that it is absolutely negligible. Therefore, assuming the accuracy of the facts given by the other side I submit there is absolutely no case on the merits either for enforcing Regulation III of 1818 or for keeping these persons in jail.

I have only one more word to say. There are many friends here who, I believe, are absolutely sincere in thinking that these persons are having all the comforts of life in jails. I wish they had been in our position. I pray they may sometimes be put in that position by somebody. Then they will find what all these so-called comforts of life mean to a person who has been deprived of the liberty of free movement, free communication and freedom of life. What does it matter if you provide them with all the comforts of life, though I do not admit for a moment that they are provided with all the comforts of life. But assuming for a moment that they are provided with all the comforts of life, of what value are these comforts to a man of sensitive, emotional nature who cares more

for freedom than the comforts of life ? You will be perfectly justified in saying that this man deserves it. Convicted of a crime, he is a prisoner, and therefore he must suffer, but it is a different matter, entirely indefensible, if a man against whom no charge is framed, who has not been tried, is made to suffer, and, if he is of a sensitive nature, he is sure to develop diseases. That is, I submit sheer tyranny practised by a foreign Government on a subjugated people. That is the real fact. You must look at the whole thing from that point of view. All these arguments and speeches of ours will not convince you of the truth nor shall we on the other side, be convinced by your arguments. For us, it is a question of fundamental rights. We believe you have no right to keep these laws on the Statute-book, and that you are doing it simply for the supposed safety of your domination, of your Imperialism. You believe that these people to whom this Resolution refers are disturbing your administration in this country and therefore you must keep them in jail. That will continue to go on until we have got full legislative power in this House to stop you from doing that. So my friends here who raise these questions do not raise them in the hope that you will accept and act upon any Resolution passed in this House, but they raise these questions in order to show how keen, how universal, the feeling is in the country, and how absolutely necessary it is for you to respect that feeling and to show your consideration for that, if you really desire any kind of co-operation from the people of this country in your administration of this country. If you claim that you do not care for any such co-operation, you can carry on in the manner you do. As I said before, it is to prove and to establish our absolute powerlessness and impotence that these Resolutions are brought forward, and it is also to prove that there is a standing grievance, without the redress of which there is absolutely no chance of any political peace in this country. Therefore, I will beg Honourable Members on the opposite side to put themselves for a minute in our position. Let them imagine what would have been their frame of mind if they were in our position. It was suggested by one Honourable Member that it was a mere question of sentiment. Of course, it is a question of sentiment also, but not altogether. The whole world is governed by sentiment. But it is also a question of material benefits of bread and butter. We believe you are taking our bread and butter from our mouths, and therefore we grumble, we weep and we cry. All this is natural,

absolutely natural. It is not a question of mere sentiment. Your keeping people behind bars without trial or charge and our exposing that every year, do you call that sentiment? If that is a sentiment, I beg to point out that the whole world, and particularly the British Isles are governed by that sentiment. There is no nation on the face of the globe which values its liberties more than the English people do. The question we have raised is a question of liberty, of having a fair trial. I am rather surprised to hear an Englishman talking of this as a sentiment. It is a question of our fundamental rights; it is not a question of sentiment. I will, therefore, beg of the official Benches to put themselves even for a few minutes in our position, and then consider what would have been their feelings if they had been in our place. All their speeches, all their literature, and all their actions in history show what their setniment would have been. No Englishman, for a moment, would tolerate this state of affairs if his people were treated like this; no self-respecting community would have tolerated this for any length of time. We have to tolerate this because we are absolutely helpless, we are absolutely impotent and therefore you justify your actions and say that they are necessary for our safety. Our safety indeed! Please do not justify your actions on the ground of their being lawful. Even if they be technically lawful, they are not necessary, and not in your interests. You are creating a volume of indignation against yourself which practically makes this vicious circle perpetual, and which removes all chances of conciliation. There will be no chance of any conciliation between yourself and the people of this country unless this grievance is redressed. I therefore beg of you, not in any spirit of hatred, not in any spirit of controversy, but in a real spirit of genuine desire on my part and on the part of my people to understand you, to respect our feelings and not to treat us in the way in which you sometimes do. One Honourable Member questioned our right to be the only friends of India. He said the friends of India are not confined to these Benches. I am disposed to retort that the friends of India are confined to these Benches. In any case these Benches are greater friends of India than the Benches opposite just as you are greater friends of Great Britain. You are absolutely loyal, absolutely patriotic to your country and to your people. You are British to the very marrow of your bones. You are patriotic and loyal to your country. Well, we claim a similar honour on these Benches and we are greater friends of India

than anybody on those Benches can be. I may tell you that if that were not true, I would be the first person to go and drown myself in the Jamuna. There is no Englishman in this country who is a greater friend of India than myself or than people sitting on these Benches. I make no bones about it. I understand the policy of the Government underlying this procedure. I therefore say, don't think we are children and could be satisfied with platitudes. We are grown-up men. You have also helped in making us understand these principles. They are principles well-known to everybody here. Therefore, do not play with us. Do not treat us like children. Say that what you are doing is necessary for the safety of your Empire. Say so. We will probably say that you are wrong but we cannot prevent you from doing as you please. That is the long and the short of it.

29. THE RAILWAY ADMINISTRATION AND INDIAN INTERESTS

I RISE TO support the motion moved by my Honourable friend, Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar. It was said by one Honourable Member from this side of the House that it is ridiculous for us to omit Demands like this altogether, by which we encourage the Government of India to exercise their powers of certification too often.[1] Well, Sir, on the face of it, it does look ridiculous, but what are we to do? Has the Government of India during the last three or four years shown any regard for the opinions and sentiments of the people of India with reference to the administration of the railways or with regard to the general policy of the Government of India? If they are in the habit of continuously disregarding the wishes of this side of the House and of the general feelings of the community, what are we to do, but to record our censure of and our dissatisfaction with their policy in as strong terms as we possibly can? That, I submit, is the reason for the course we are adopting on this side of the House and I may at once say that the Railway Department of the Government of India is the one department in regard to which every Indian feels the greatest possible humiliation and suffers under the sense of the greatest possible injustice. Next to the Army it is the one department of the Government of India which has been the cause of India being bled white. We have suffered enormous losses from the railway policy of the Government of India ever since railways were first started in this country, and that chapter has not been closed even today. I find, Sir, that one of the most moderate politicians

Speech delivered by Lala Lajpat Rai in the Central Legislative Assembly, on 23 February 1927, during the discussion on the Railway Budget in support of the Cut Motion to reduce the Demand under the head Railway Board, moved by S. Srinivasa Iyengar.

The motion was adopted by the Assembly by 59 to 52 votes,

in this country the Honourable Sir D. E. Wacha, some years back, even before this Reforms Act, recorded his verdict on the railway policy of the Government of India in strong language, which to the present moment remains good.[2] I do not propose to read a long extract, but I do propose to read two brief extracts from his writings. He said :

"At the very outset we cannot help remarking that the breathless pace at which capital, like water, has been expended during the last few years, at the behest of the interested Chambers of Commerce, is not only inordinate but most improvident. The entire railway policy of the Government, specially in its financial aspect, demands the most searching investigation by an impartial tribunal of experts wholly independent of influence at Calcutta and Whitehall."

Then, Sir, he goes on further :

"The worst and most inexcusable feature of Indian railway policy is the supreme indifference and neglect of the authorities to the crying wants and wishes of the Indian public—those vast millions of the population who travel about 36 miles in a year and who now contribute the largest portion of the coaching traffic amounting to 13 crores rupees per annum. The interests of the European mercantile community are deemed of paramount importance while those of the Indian population at large have been uniformly held of secondary importance, if at all. At the beck and nod of the former, with their screaming organs of opinion behind, the Government readily spend millions like water on railways without an ultimate thought of the tax-payers and the return such capital would give. It is the greatest blot on Indian railway administration that it ignores the interests of the permanent population and is eager to satisfy first the cry of the interested and migratory European merchant. No private railway enterprise would spend such enormous sums of money and no proprietary body, however rich and influential, would tolerate in any part of the civilised world, the loans after loans."

And so on, And he sums up in one sentence, which I submit is still the characteristic of the railway policy of the Government of India :

"It is a dismal tale, the history of Indian railway finance from first to last."

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes : What is the date of that book?

Lala Lajpat Rai : Some years ago, before the Reform days but I have read this in order to show that the railway administration of India has not improved a bit since that—since one of the greatest moderate politicians of this country (Sir D.E. Wacha), than whom no one understood the finances of this country better, and than whom there was no greater authority either on railway finances or the general finances of India, deliberately made the observations referred to by me.

Several points have been raised by Pandit Motilal Nehru in his severe indictment of the railway policy of this Government, and the indictment which he has made is well grounded on facts. I may state at once, and I weigh my words, and I say it with the greatest sense of responsibility, that the railway administration of India is not carried on in the interests of this country. Look at it from whatever point of view, look at it from the point of view of the travelling public, look at it from the point of view of the employees of the railway administration, from the point of view of labour ; look at it from any point of view you like, you will find that the railway administration of this country is not being carried on in the best interests of the country. Firstly, it is carried on in the interests of foreign trade ; secondly, it is carried on in the interests of the European mercantile community, as was said by Sir D. E. Wacha ; and thirdly, it is carried on in the interests of the European and Anglo-Indian employees of the Railway Department. We find Sir, that Indians doing the same kind of duty, performing the same functions, having the same responsibility, are differently paid, and paid very low salaries as compared with their Anglo-Indian and European colleagues doing exactly the same kind of work. We find the Europeans and Anglo-Indians on the different railways in India obtaining greater privileges in the matter of salaries, in the matter of leave allowances and other attractions, in the matter of living and other conditions, than the Indian employees do. To the charge that was brought by my friend Pandit Motilal Nehru of incompetence, of negligence against the Railway Board I add another, that of callousness to the human needs of the labouring population which works in the railways here. I submit, Sir, I was amazed and I was very sorry to hear that a kind-hearted gentleman and an

otherwise noble man should have stood up in this House yesterday to defend the policy of the Government in paying Rs. 9 and Rs. 10 a month to Indian workmen on the railways.[3] In the 20th century to call labour a commodity to be sold and bought in the open market at the lowest prices available and to taunt the Honourable Member who was quoting figures from other countries to show that labour was much better paid there, that he paid his agricultural labourer even less, I submit, is a thing than which there could be no greater proof of the inhumanity of the system that prevails in India. To justify a wage of Rs. 9 or Rs. 10 a month for a man, probably a man with a family, is, I consider, a thing which is absolutely indefensible and which would not be tolerated in any part of the world except India, where the people of the country are absolutely voiceless and helpless in the management of their affairs. Sir, my friend Mr. T. Prakasam[4] was quoting figures from the budgets of other countries pointing out the proportion of the maximum salaries and the minimum salaries which were paid on the railways in those countries, and what was the reply from the official Benches? One Honourable Member interrupted and said that he should also quote the mileage of railways which the officials in other countries were looking after, implying thereby that salaries were determined by mileages. He evidently thought we had not studied the mileages of the railways of the world. There are countries, Sir, which have a greater mileage than India. Mr. Prakasam was comparing the minimum and maximum salaries paid to railwaay officials in the other countries of the world to the corresponding figures relating to this country. But what has mileage to do with human needs? Does mileage affect human needs? Are we not bound in decency to provide a living wage for all who work on these railways. Are we to consider that because the agricultural labourers in some parts of this country get a wage of four or five annas a day which I do not admit, therefore a human Government, a civilised Government, an up-to-date Government is justified in paying Rs. 9 or Rs. 10 a month to the workmen on the railways simply because they find a great number of them can be had at these salaries and there is competition between them? That only shows the utter helplessness of the people, the economic helplessness and the misery of the people who have to accept this service even for Rs. 9 and Rs. 10 a month, on which salary they have perhaps to maintain a family of four or five. What is this but sweating and sweating of a most

revolting nature ? I submit that is a very serious charge. I expected my Honourable friend to say he was sorry for it, but he never said so. It may be that perhaps he cannot immediately improve their position, cannot grant a salary much higher immediately because it will involve a very large amount of money, but I expected some word of sympathy from him for these unfortunate people who have to work and live within that salary. That word of sympathy never came from the other side. It is all very well for my friends to say that we should not encourage these strikes and these labour troubles which interfere with the administration of railways, but they forget that we are human, we cannot help looking at these things from the human point of view. While we admit that the Honourable Member cannot grant an increase to Rs. 30 at once as proposed by my Honourable friend Mr. Jogiah,[5] he should have said he would try to improve the condition of these workmen and look into their wages to some extent; but no word of sympathy came from those Benches at all. We are being rebuked from day to day for moving motions which make us look ridiculous according to them in the eyes of the public, but I submit this is a question upon which there is a clash of opinion and there is a clash of interests also. We can well understand the interests of the Honourable gentlemen on the other side. We need not question their motives. Interests are so strong in this world that they affect our judgment and our characters even without motives being consciously bad. Sir, it is not a question of motives, it is a question of interests—their interest and our interest. Their interest and the interest of the Indian public and the Indian wage earner clash. We are bound to voice our interest even though it may take us centuries to have our voice heard by the authorities that be. We must go on hammering from year to year until we get the power to have these grievances redressed.

Sir, the Indian Railway administration is the greatest white elephant that the Indian tax-payer has to maintain from year to year. The convention has not improved matters to any appreciable extent. It has not been a success so far. I admit that in certain respects the administration of the railways has improved, I admit that the attitude of Indian economists towards the railways, which they looked upon unfavourably, has to be changed because everyone wants to travel by railway and it is cheaper. But at the same time when we compare these railways with the railways on the conti-

nent or with the railways in the United States or Canada, and when we compare the salaries that are enjoyed by the officials employed by the state on those railways as compared with the salaries of officials here in this country, we find what a great difference there is between the two. Sir, in India there is no proportion between the benefits conferred on the people and the comfort enjoyed by them and the salaries enjoyed by the highest railway officials. It has been insinuated that we shall have to go to the market for the most competent men because in this country there are no people who are fit to become members of the Railway Board or who can adequately perform those duties. Sir, I repudiate that insinuation with the greatest emphasis that I can command. But even if we have to go to the open market of the world for getting expert knowledge or for recruiting those people whom we want in this country, will the Government of India allow us to go into the market of the world in order to fill the posts of the Civil Services? Where then is the question of the markets of the world? There is absolutely no question of such a thing. It is to be assumed that the British alone can administer this country in the best interests of the country, and that a certain proportion of the higher services of India must be British employed on their own terms, then there is no question of choice or market price. If the British force the services of their people on us, force us to employ them at such exorbitant prices as do not prevail anywhere else in the world—which are in fact not only 3 or 4 times but ten times as high as those given to corresponding officers in other civilised countries—I submit it is not a question of buying or selling in the market. It is a question of forcing us to accept their own price, their own valuation; and so long as we are forced to do this, we are bound to raise our voice in protest against invidious distinction and unnatural preferments. Sir, in the matter of the recruitment to Indian services we want to occupy the same position in our country as other people do in theirs. The claim of my countrymen that at least one member of the Railway Board should be an Indian is not an exorbitant claim. Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas[6] says—and I endorse what he says—that our aspiration is that every member of the Railway Board should be an Indian; because it is only an Indian and an Indian alone who can safeguard the interests of the Indian people, the Indian nation and the Indian wage-earner. Others cannot do that, however angelic, however saintly they may be. Their interests are different from ours; and that has

been distinctly shown by the charges that have been brought by this side of the House against the railway administration, especially by my Honourable friend Pandit Motilal Nehru. It is not a question of reserves and surpluses at all. It is a question of the point of view from which you must look at the thing. The question is whether the railway policy of the Government of India shall be determined in the interests of India and Indians or in the interests of Britain and the British. If you are going to invest the tax-payer's money in such surpluses and reserves, I do not know where you might go. Surpluses can be created to any extent and paid by loans whenever the interests of British trade demand it. No case has been made out for surpluses and reserves. I listened with great respect to the speech made by the Honourable Sir Clement Hindley[7] but I am sorry to say I was not convinced by the arguments or the facts adduced by him in his defence. The indictment made against the Railway Board from these Benches is perfectly justified. It is based on the past history of the railway administration in India, it is based on the present policy of the railway administration of India, and it is based on its future prospects also. There is no prospect of any reforms being introduced into the railway administration in India unless the Government of India makes up its mind freely to introduce the Indian element much more than it has done so far.

One word more, Sir, before I sit down. We shall not be satisfied, if one Indian member is taken on the Railway Board and taken from the service itself. It may of course be said that we are clamouring here for posts We are not ; but even if we were, what does that matter ? How can people who are themselves clamouring for posts and for high salaries charge us with sordid motives ? After all, we are human, We shall not be satisfied, and the Indian public will not be satisfied unless the Government employs some men from the public life of this country who are as well versed in railway affairs as members of the Railway Board. We do not want men to be promoted from the lower ranks of the service into high positions on the Railway Board because, unfortunately circumstanced as they are, they will not be in a position, by the force of habits and environments and by the force of circumstances, to look after the interests of India so well as public men who move in the public life of India will do. I do not admit that the public life of this country is so absolutely poor in talent as not to be able to furnish one or two

members for the Railway Board. I admit we may have to go with caution. We have no objection to foreign experts being employed in technical departments, where they can guide us, instruct us and help us : but I do contend that in the administrative line our men can do as well as Englishmen. I do not say I myself can but there are others who can do even better. I therefore think, Sir, that this stock argument advanced from day to day, and from hour to hour that there are no Indians fit for these administrative posts, should be discontinued. People on the other side ought not to put forward this stock argument with any pride. How can they say that after 200 years of British rule in this country, the people of the country are so absolutely devoid of ability, so incapable of learning anything, so absolutely poor in talent, that they cannot supply one man to sit on the Railway Board, to look after the interests of India and to help in the management of Indian Railways. That would be a poor admission to make and it would be a grave and serious charge against British work in India. Sir, I am not one of those who believe that British rule has been an unmixed evil. It has done good as well as evil, though on the whole no foreign rule can ever do much good. But at the same time the argument advanced that we must have the best men and those best men are not available in India cannot be listened to. It certainly does not add to the pleasantness of our relations and it does not help us in any way. They say that their motives are the best. We may not question their motives out of courtesy ; but facts are facts and they speak for themselves. After all they are human beings. And where is a human being who is not swayed by self-interest and the interest of those near and dear to him ? There may be exceptions to this rule, but they can only be few and far between. I voice the sentiment of the whole country, of the vast population of my countrymen, when I say that the railway administration in this country is not being carried on in the best interests of the country. Sir, this is the one department where, on platforms, in railway carriages, in offices and in many other ways, every Indian feels and feels to the core, the marrow of his bones, that he is a slave, a subject to be ill-treated, to be insulted and to be humiliated by men whose position and status in life compared to his is nothing. He has to eat humble pie at every step. Be he a Raja or a Maharaja, be he a Member of the Assembly or of the Council of State, he has to eat humble pie before every Anglo-Indian or European, however small and low-salaried he

may be. It enters like steel into his very soul and he can never forget this outstanding fact of his life. He sleeps with a sore heart, a heavy heart, after having suffered that humiliation ; he curses the time and the moment when he allowed himself to be subjected to foreign rule.

30. THE CRIMINAL LAW REPEALING AND AMENDING BILL (1927)

THE FIRST speech of the Honourable the Home Member[1] had raised expectations in my mind that he was going to be generous in dealing with the merits of the case and that he would not rely at all on the technical defects of the Bill before us. I am sorry to say that those expectations were not realised later on. After having said that he was not going to rely on the technicalities, time and again, he referred to the defects in the drafting of the Bill. It was not necessary to do so if he wanted to confine himself to the merits of the case. I am perfectly at one with him in holding that the drafting of the Bill is not perfect—it is defective—and I also plead guilty to the charge that the interval between the first debate and now[2] has not been properly used to remove the defects of drafting. But all the same it must be remembered that Members on this side of the House have not got at their disposal the services of a highly paid Legislative Department which is paid from the public exchequer for the purpose of drafting Bills and correcting those mistakes of drafting. In this respect, I should have expected a generous treatment from the Government side. I should have expected that if they saw palpable defects in the drafting of this Bill, they would have suggested the amendments themselves. The arguments on the merits, of course, stand aside. The Government have every right to oppose the Bill on the merits as they have done, and as they might always do—that is a different thing—but to base arguments on defects in the drafting of the Bill, and not to suggest amendments to put the drafting right, does not show a very generous and statesmanlike attitude on the part of a Government

Speech delivered by Lala Lajpat Rai in the Central Legislative Assembly on 23 August 1927 in support of Hari Singh Gour's bill for the repeal of the Indian Criminial Law (Amendment) Act of 1908.

which of course, though we do not admit it to be national, claims to be national. So I submit that the complaint on the part of the Honourable the Home Member was not quite consistent with the spirit of the opening sentence of his remarks. Secondly, Sir, it must not be overlooked that the Honourable Sir Hari Singh Gour is not the only person who is interested in this Bill, as the Honourable the Home Member seemed to think when he was giving his final reply. I will readily admit that Sir Hari Singh Gour has been well punished for having at all appended his signature to that Report which deferred the repeal of this Act at the time when it was under the consideration of the Repressive Laws Committee[3]. This was a measure which was abnoxious and vicious in principle, and he should not have agreed to the deferring of the repeal of the Act under any circumstances, and if he finds now that the fact that he agreed to have the repeal of this Act deferred is thrust at him, by Benches opposite, he has only himself to thank for it. Therefore, I have no sympathy with him on that account ; I want to proceed entirely on the merits of the legislative measure before us, and am prepared to say that the whole of this measure was conceived in a wrong spirit, carried out in a wrong spirit, and is being maintained on the Statute-book in a wrong spirit. It cannot be justified on any possible grounds. Sir, taking the Act as it is, it is admitted that it was an exceptional measure, meant for exceptional times and extraordinary conditions. If the issue is narrowed down to this, that having been enacted in a time of supposed disorder, confined to one province—I do not admit that it was justified even then—but assuming that it was......

Mr President : I do not desire to interrupt the Honourable Member, but would it not be better if he reserved his general observations for the last stage of the Bill ? We are now dealing with clause 2 only[4].

Lala Lajpat Rai : I think, Sir, it will be more convenient for me and save time to place the whole of my argument about this Act before the House.

Mr. President : The Chair has merely made a suggestion which the Honourable Member need not accept if he does not wish to.

Lala-Lajpat Rai : I have no objection to defer to the ruling

or advice of the Chair, but I find that the speakers on the other side have been attacking the whole Bill all the time.

Mr. President : There was only one speech so far.

Lala Lajpat Rai : Sir, the position which the other side has taken is that it is necessary to retain this Act on the Statute-book.

Mr. President : The Chair has absolutely no objection to the Honourable Members making general observations at this stage, but on the distinct understanding that, when the final stage is reached, Honourable Members will not be allowed to make long speeches.

Lala Lajpat Rai : I do not propose, Sir, to make a second speech. So, with the permission of the Honourable the President, I might go on and finish what I have to say.

Mr. President : Lala Lajpat Rai.

Lala Lajpat Rai : I was saying, Sir, that under any circumstances it was admitted that this was an exceptional measure meant for exceptional times and extraordinary conditions. We are not enacting a new measure. We are just proposing to repeal a measure which is already on the Statute-book but which, I said, was admitted to have been enacted in special circumstances for extraordinary conditions. The issue then is whether it is desirable to retain this measure any longer or for all time to come on the Statute-book. That is practically the issue. Now, Sir, I know that the Government generally are very fond of taking extraordinary powers and they never part with powers that they have once taken unless they are compelled to do so. Sir, I am not at all surprised at the attitude of the Honourable Members on the other side that they do not want to part with the powers that they have taken under this Act. Their anxiety for the liberties of the subject seems to be too superficial to be taken seriously. They do not care for the liberties of the subject as long as they can keep their hold tight on them by executive measures. No one objects to their exercise of their powers for maintaining peace or for checking disorders, or for doing anything which is permissible to them to protect law and order, under the ordinary laws of the country. Exception is being taken to this exceptional measure being retained on the Statute-book as if it was an ordinary law of the land. We have to see whether any such exceptional measure is needed in the

present circumstances to be retained on the Statute-book for the purpose for which it might have been needed at any particular time in the past. That is the real point, Sir. I might say that to my mind the whole of this measure, beginning from the Preamble, was a grave violation of the liberties of the subject and (subject to correction), I have been unable to find any parallel in the history of any country for such wide and general powers being given to the executive at any time. In order to satisfy myself on this point, I have just consulted the Coalition Acts of Ireland which were passed by the British Imperial Government in those times when there were disorders in Ireland, probably about the times when the Phoenix Park murders[5] took place. There also I find that they were very careful to specify the particular circumstances which had necessitated such a legislation in the Act itself (in the Preamble), and did not use such general terms as have been used in this Act. The Preamble of this Act says that one of the objects of the law is "the prohibition of associations dangerous to the public peace." Such a phrase is very extensive and very drastic : it can cover anything. Looking at the general lines of progress, everything turns on public peace. Any progressive movement may be considered by the powers that be as dangerous to public peace. Ordinarily they do not need special measures of this kind to protect public peace. They have ample powers under the general criminal laws of the country to maintain public peace and order without resorting to special legislation, unless special circumstances justify such legislation. Are we to suppose that these special circumstances exist in the country at the present time ? I submit, they do not. Is this law going to be a permanent feature of the law of the country ? Are the powers that were given to the executive for execptional circumstances going to be maintained for ever ? I submit they should not.

The case on the merits which has been argued by the Honourable the Home Member is so extraordinarily weak that I do not think many arguments are needed to demolish it. I will divide his arguments into two parts. He has given you certain cases of disorders in the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay. He has said that he himself was connected with the Presidency of Bombay and he has also stated that in those Presidencies no need or occasion arose to apply the law or at least the Local Governments did not

apply it in these Presidencies. Is not that conclusive evidence to the effect that the Government can carry on its administration and check such disorders and punish the people concerned in such disorders without the help of this special law ?

The Honourable Mr. J. Crerar : I rise to a point of personal explanation, Sir. I think I pointed out quite clearly that so far at any rate as Madras was concerned, the condition of affairs that arose was so extensive and so dangerous that so limited and restricted a measure as the second part of the Criminal Law Amendment Act could not have been effective ; I never contended for a moment that circumstances had not arisen which, if they had been less extensive and less dangerous, might not have been effectively dealt with by this Act.

Lala Lajpat Rai : I am not concerned at all with the opinions of the Honourable the Home Member as to the circumstances that existed. I am merely concerned with the fact that the law was not extended, and was not applied, to those Presidencies. That is the outstanding fact on which I rely and we know that the Government of the Bombay Presidency was given credit at that time that they practically suppressed the non-co-operation movement or at least they professed to have suppressed it, without the help of this law. They punished all disorders without having recourse to these repressive laws, *i.e.* without the extension of the Seditious Meetings Act or the Criminal Law Amendment Act. Credit was taken by that Government and that credit was extensively given to the then Governor of the Bombay Presidency, for this, though in those Presidencies, the non-co-operation movement was not a bit less strong than in Northern India. The disorders that are being relied upon in support of the contention that this law ought to be retained on the Statute-book were not very many. Instances of such disorders in the South and the West were in no way less than those which took place in the Northern parts of India. But still the Governors of those Presidencies did not consider it at all necessary for the preservation of the public peace and for the maintaining of law and order to extend the provisions of this law to their parts of the country. I submit this is conclusive evidence of the fact that the Government has ample powers in the ordinary criminal law of the country to punish all breaches of the peace and all breaches of order without having recourse to this extraordinary law and also

to prevent disorder. That argument, instead of helping the Honourable the Home Member in opposing this Bill, practically demolishes the whole of his case. The fact is that when Government become nervous and panicky, they do not want to have recourse to the ordinary provisions of the law and to the ordinary Criminal Procedure Code. They want executive summary powers to declare so and so, so that the presumptive evidence will be in their favour. That is what has been given to them under this Act. What was done in Northern India ? This Act was originally enacted to suppress the alleged secret societies in Bengal, but when the non-co-operation movement came on and became strong in Northern India with an open volunteer movement, with its avowed legal objects, it was used to suppress it. Of course, all movements are liable to be abused and occasionally there is bound to be some violation of the original objects. People are liable to exceed their legitimate purposes and be carried away by their enthusiasm, but the ordinary law of the land ought to be sufficient for that purpose. But Governments are not satisfied with that ; they do not want to adopt the ordinary course of proving their cases. They want a provision to declare by an executive order in the exercise of a summary secret power, like the one given by Regulation III of 1818, that such and such association is illegal, unlawful, and therefore it ought to be suppressed and persons who are members of that association ought to be punished, I submit there can be absolutely no justification for such a position. I submit that there was no justification whatsoever for declaring that the Volunteers movement of the Congress was an unlawful association[6] at all, even assuming for the sake of argument that there were here and there such disorders and such breaches of the peace as might have been punishable under the ordinary criminal law of the land. The very fact that the Congress Volunteers Association was declared an unlawful association and that people were punished under the provisions of this special law establishes a clear and flagrant case of the abuse of the powers given under this Act and no more instances are required to prove that the power should not be retained by the executive any longer.

I submit, Sir, that one of the complaints made by my Honourable friend Sir Hari Singh Gour was that he was not supplied with a correct copy of the Act on which this Bill is based. In that

connection, just by way of a remark, I wish to say that we on this side of the House are in a very unfortunate position. We cannot be expected to bring all our library and up-to-date corrected copies of all Acts with us every time we come to the Assembly. We have to depend upon the Library which is provided for the Legislative Assembly, and if in that Legislative Assembly Library, Government do not care to keep corrected copies and up-to-date amended copies of the Acts, I submit the Government are to blame and not ourselves. It is very easy for Government Members to get up and say to our face : "Oh, this is not based on a corrected copy of the Act." Here I want to remind Honourable Members that the complaint was made by us even in the last Session, when the Steel Industry (Protection) Bill was introduced, that correct copies of Acts were not available in the Library for the use of Honourable Members of the House. Complaints were also made that no adequate literature was available in the Library so that Members could consult it. Nothing has been done till now to improve the state of the Library. All the copies that are available in the Library are those which are said to be unamended and uncorrected. Yet when we use the copies supplied to us by the Library, the fact of the copy on which we rely being incorrect, is thrown at us and used as an argument against our case. We cannot carry the whole law in our brains. When we are supplied with such uncorrected copies, I submit, Sir, it is the Government that is to be blamed and not we. I hope the Government will take care and keep the Library up-to-date so that we can be supplied with corrected and amended copies of all Acts when required.

But, Sir, I think the amendment pointed out by the Honourable the Home Member has made the case worse so far as open associations are concerned. The original Act gave power only to the Governor-General in Council, but the amended Act gives that power to the Local Governments. So that the slight check which the Governor-General in Council might have exercised over Local Governments and in this connection the little care and caution which the Government of India might have exercised in applying the provisions of the Act, have also been impossible under the so-called amended Act, as it stands now. Any Local Government can take it into its head to apply the provisions of this Act and declare *any* association unlawful.

The Honourable Mr. J. Crerar : Not *any* association.

Lala Lajpat Rai : Every Local Government, if it takes it into its head to suppress any association, may declare it unlawful, as they did in the case of the Congress Volunteers Association on the ground that they considered it dangerous to public peace. My Honourable friend wanted us to give instances of the abuse of such powers by Local Governments. It may not be strictly relevant to this case, but I will give you an instance of the legal acumen and the legal understanding generally shown by Governments in applying this kind of laws to particular cases. The Punjab Government with all its legal machinery at its back declared the private meetings of the Provincial Congress Committee and the City Congress Committee of Lahore to be public meetings liable to be prohibited under the Seditious Meetings Act[7] (Shame). Having proceeded to interpret the law in that high-handed fashion, they prosecuted four honourable citizens, got them convicted and sent to jail. Then the Government of India had to come to the rescue and order the release of those people who had been convicted under that law at the instance of the Punjab Government. I do not say that all Local Governments do that, I do not believe that all do so. But here is one concrete instance of a Local Government with all its machinery going entirely wrong and abusing the powers given to it by the law and declaring private committee meetings of a public body which had not been declared unlawful liable to be prohibited under the Seditious Meetings Act. I see an Honourable Member representing that Local Government adorning the opposite Benches and he might justify the action and the conduct of the legal machinery of that Local Government. Having perpetrated that wrong, that outrageous wrong, the Government has not upto this time apologised for that mistake by which they sent four respectable citizens of the province to jail. They had to rot in jail for seven weeks and then the Local Government without any apology whatsoever and without any excuse simply said : "the Governor-General has held that this is a mistake and that this is a wrong conviction and we therefore release these people." The conviction still hangs against their heads. I may also tell the Honourable the Home Member that it was not the virtuous and magic powers of this Act that caused the Volunteer Movement, as he thinks perhaps, to collapse. We all went to jail, not because this Act existed, but

because we did not want to defend ourselves (Hear, hear.) ! We did not want to use the ordinary machinery of the law for the purpose of proving that we were innocent. It was not they who sent us to jail under the powers given under this Act. We voluntarily went to jail to vindicate what we considered to be our position. We might have been right, or we might have been wrong. But the Honourable the Home Member cannot take the credit of that result for this Bill, and say it helped the Government in maintaining law and order and restoring normal conditions.

Sir, the unlawful associations contemplated by this Act might be of two kinds—secret bodies or open associations. If they are secret bodies, and if they commit crimes of this nature—crimes of violence and intimidation—there is enough provision in the Indian Penal Code to punish them. We all know, and the Honourable the Home Member must know, that there is provision in the Indian Penal Code under which any member of an unlawful assembly can be proceeded against for the acts of other members done in pursuance of their common object and punished. If any member is proved guilty of violence and intimidation, surely all the members who took part in it in pursuance of that common object can be punished. Where is then the necessity for providing a special Act or to keep section 15 (b)[8] on the Statute-book ?

The justification for such a law that was given at the time the Bill was passed was that Bengal was then in a condition of anarchy and the Government could not bring the offenders to punishment by the ordinary processes of law. According to their own statement, that necessity having ceased to exist or having been provided by still more drastic laws, such as the Bengal Ordinance and Regulation III of 1818, this Act has become useless and has no *raison d'etre* to remain on the Statute-book. It is merely irritating and annoying, and the Government ought to have come forward itself to repeal this Act and to show that they do not intend to maintain these powers, which were taken for exceptional purposes, for all time to come. I submit that their not having come forward in this way shows that they are not prepared to allow the progress of the country to proceed on normal lines, that they must continue to irritate and annoy people who have the progress of the country at heart and who do not want to make a fetish of peace. Peace is a very good thing in itself, but sometimes in order to make progress

peace has to be disturbed, and there are the ordinary laws of the country to meet such a situation. Every Government must maintain peace ; that is perfectly justifiable ; and we have laws for that purpose. Special laws are only needed on special occasions and at particular times. Therefore, I consider that every non-official Indian who consents to the general application and unlimited duration of such laws is practically guilty of being an enemy of the progress of his own country—when he consents to the continuance of such laws or when he signs a report like that of the Repressive Laws Committee. I think this is nothing but a slur on our good sense and not only a slur but a handicap to progress to let a Local Government say : "Such and such an association or body of people are very annoying, they are very inconvenient, they cause trouble" and thereupon let us declare them an unlawful association. Of course it is said on the other side, that the Heads of Local Governments or the Members of the Executive Councils are not going to be so unreasonable as that ; but we know what "reasonable" and "unreasonable" mean. The words reasonable and unreasonable practically have no meaning in the dictionary of Governments and much less so in the dictionary of foreign Governments. It is the exigencies of the times that practically determine the reasonableness or unreasonableness of action. If a Government thinks that the maintenance of their prestige demands the exercise of such extraordinary power, they feel no hesitation in doing so. When they take that power and exercise that power, how can they talk of being reasonable or unreasonable ? Those words do not exist in their dictionary, or have a different meaning. If a law can provide for the prohibition of all institutions and societies that may tend even remotely to disturb the public peace then good-bye to all progress. If that were the correct view then all sorts of political associations and bodies in England, in France, must be declared to be unlawful by executive orders of the Governments. My friends talk of other parts of the Empire. But who can compare the case of Irleand with that of India ? Is there any comparison, I ask, between the two countries ? Absolutely none. My friend over there is laughing. He is an Irishman who is very proud of the stand made by his people in getting Home Rule for Ireland. I congratulate him in taking that pride, but is there absolutely any comparison between the present condition of Ireland and this country ? I admit that Governments do sometimes need special provisions of law ; and if the

Cosgrave Government wants to maintain its power by passing certain laws, is that any justification why in a country like this of 300 million people where sometimes and very occasionally disorder occurs, you should say that you are never going to let us alone except by the propagation and maintenance of these laws ? I submit that is not honourable nor reasonable. Hit at us straight. There is the ordinary law. If we are guilty of any violence, if we are guilty of any intimidation, try us in the ordinary courts of justice and punish us if you will ; we have no cause to complain. If we defy your laws we shall deserve punishment. But do not take this back-handed power to declare associations unlawful, to declare people guilty in your secret chambers and convict them upon no evidence but by the fact of the association to which they belong having been declared unlawful by the Governor-General in Council or by the Local Government.

By that I submit you are pursuing what I would call a cowardly process which no respectable and civilised Government ought to pursue. We warn you, therefore, in your own interests ; we want you to show yourself a brave Government, a civilised Government, depending upon the ordinary laws of the country and not on exceptional legislation of this kind to maintain peace and public order in this country. If you really cannot maintain peace and public order under the ordinary laws of the land, then you condemn yourself ; you condemn yourself very severely of your own incapacity and your unfitness to govern. This Act is not needed. Why should you need these executive powers to declare associations unlawful and to declare committee meetings of public bodies to be seditious ? In the case of secret societies such as you allege to have found in the Kakori case[9] and the Bolshevik trial at Cawnpore,[10] you cannot reach them except by the ordinary laws of the land. Did you at all use this Act in order to trace the Kakori dacoity or to prevent the spread of communist feeling or communist propaganda in this country ? You cannot touch them in that way. You can only touch them under the ordinary law of the land. You have not yet declared any associations unlawful under that heading. What is the use then of bringing forward an argument based on such cases ? You only use the powers under this Act in the case of open bodies like the Congress Volunteers and you make improper use of this Act to declare such a high-minded association to be

unlawful and to punish its members simply on presumptions and assumptions without giving the necessary proof in the court of law against them. I submit that is unworthy of a civilised Government. There is absolutely no need at the present moment—you yourself admit it—for such a law. The Under Secretary of State says that the political situation in India has vastly improved, that the non-co-operation movement is dead and there is absolutely no resistance to your authority. These occasional outbursts, like the Kakori case or the Bolshevik trial at Cawnpore, do they justify your keeping this law ? If on your own admission, the country is at the present moment in a normal condition and the political situation has vastly improved as the Secretary of State says, where then is the necessity for your opposing the repeal of this Act ? You should have generously come forward and said : "Yes, the political situation has completely improved ; there is absolutely no need of any repressive laws at the present moment, and we shall readily agree to the repeal of of this Act." But your opposition shows one of two things : either those statements are false, absolutely false, and the political situation has not improved, or it has really improved ; (though I think from our point of view it has deteriorated, not improved) but from your point of view it has improved and we are at the present moment considering your point of view. Well, if it has really improved and if you really boast of having improved it by your administrative measures, by your diplomacy and your policy, then why oppose the repeal of this Act ? Why do you not generously come forward and say : "We do not require this exceptional legislation now ; you have become good boys." Well, either we are good or we are bad. If we are good boys or have become good boys, then this Act is no longer needed. If we are still bad boys, then you are not right in saying that we have become good boys and have turned over a new leaf. One of these two statements must be wrong. I submit the Government are not properly advised in opposing the passing of this measure. In all countries which are progressive, where there is life, there will be occasional outbursts of disorder, there will be occasionally cases like the Kakori case, there will be occasionally cases like the Bolshevik trial at Cawnpore ; you cannot keep this kind of law for those occasional cases. If there is a widespread secret agency that is undermining the peace and progress of the country, then you may be justified in providing special legislation.

But when you yourself admit that there is no widespread conspiracy —perhaps you may try to make out an exception in the case of Bengal—I do not know of any reason why you should still insist on having this law.

Mr. President : The Honourable Member is perfectly within his rights in speaking at this great length ; but I understand Honourable Members are very anxious to get through all the stages of this Bill today and they should not find fault with the Chair or with the Government if they are disappointed.

Lala Lajpat Rai : I am not going to prolong this argument ; but, Sir, you will pardon my saying that after the rhetorical speech of the Honourable the Home Member it was necessary to point out the flaws in his argument.........

Mr. President : Which is the more important from the Honourable Member's point of view ?

Lala Lajpat Rai : Under these circumstances, I appeal to this House that they should unanimously vote for the passing of this Bill. If there are any defects in the drafting of the Bill, I think those defects can be remedied by agreeing to verbal alterations in the Bill. I quite agree with the other side that the real vital part of the Bill is clause (b) of section 15. It is that we are attacking and it is that we want to get rid of.

31. THE GOLD STANDARD AND RESERVE BANK OF INDIA

I WANT TO make a few observations on the principal contents of this measure. The points that interest me very much at this stage are two: the nature of this bank and the character of the directorate that is going to manage the affairs of the bank. I understood till now (before Mr. Cocke's[1] speech) that non-official opinion, both European and Indian, was inclined to agree that this bank should be a State bank and not a shareholders' bank. I know that Sir Alexander Murray[2] and Sir Victor Sassoon[3] both said that they were originally inclined in favour of the idea of a shareholders' bank, but in deference to the opinion of this side of the House they were prepared to accept a State bank in place of shareholders' bank: Today again, the plea has been raised by Mr. Cocke that they are in favour of a shareholders' bank. Sir, I may take the opportunity of stating on behalf of this side of the House that under no circumstances are we prepared to accept a shareholders' bank. (Hear, hear!) This Bill might be passed over our heads. The scheme might be put into operation against our will, but under no circumstances shall we agree to a shareholders' bank. The arguments against the shareholders' bank have been advanced pretty fully by Honourable gentlemen who have discussed the matter yesterday and today. But I will just refer to one or two more points. It is

Speech delivered by Lala Lajpat Rai on 31 August 1927 during the discussion on the Gold Standard and the Reserve Bank of India Bill (1927). The Bill introduced in the Assembly by the Finance Member of the Government of India, Sir Basil Blackett, provided for: (1) the establishment of a gold standard for British India and (2) the constitution of a Reserve Bank of India to control the working of that standard and to regulate the issue of bank notes and the keeping of reserves with a view to securing stability in the monetary system of British India.

The motion to consider the Bill as reported by the Joint Committee was adopted.

claimed on behalf of the shareholders' bank that a shareholders' bank will completely divest the Secretary of State and the Government of India at least of a great measure of the control of this Bank. I, Sir, do not accept that point of view. This bank is not an ordinary corporation or company. The facts that in future it is going to control and manage the currency of the country, and that on many occasions it requires the sanction of Government and has to submit to Government control, show conclusively that to compare it with an ordinary corporation or company, whether it be a railway company or any other company, is entirely absurd. On every page of this Bill, Government control and Government sanction is practically written. The Bank when established is going to control the currency policy of the Government of India which will affect practically the interests of every inhabitant of India, whether he is represented on this Bank or not. Therefore, I submit, Sir, that to compare this Bank with such ordinary corporations or companies that are exclusively owned by shareholders and managed by directorates elected by the shareholders without any interference from or reference to the Government does not hold good at all. Then, Sir, it has also been pointed out by several speakers that the shareholders' control over this Bank, as we know from past experience of banks and corporations of this kind, will be practically imaginary, that it will not be real. Mr. Vidya Sagar Pandya[4] yesterday showed to you from figures gathered from the proceedings of the general meetings of the Imperial Bank what interest the shareholders of the Imperial Bank have been taking in the affairs of the Imperial Bank for the last five years. This morning I received a letter from an Indian shareholder of the Imperial Bank at Calcutta, showing that at the last general meeting of the shareholders of the Bank only 3 per cent. out of the total voting strength of the Bank took part in the proceedings, in spite of the extensive canvassing that was done by the directors and officials of the Bank, and that the point of view of the Indian section was entirely neglected. This fact, although the majority of the shares are held by Indians, shows the dangers of a shareholders' bank. That conclusively establishes that under no circumstances can we accept the plea that a shareholders' bank will give a real representation to the shareholders. I may say at once that there is no desire on the part of the House to exclude the European mercantile community, who have mercantile, commercial or other interests in

this country, from the management of this bank ; but one point is absolutely clear and I want to make it more clear, if possible—that we shall not be a party to any measure for the establishment of a Reserve Bank which does not secure to the Indian population a majority of the elected representatives on the directorate of the Bank. If that is assured to us by any scheme whatsoever we shall agree to it, otherwise we shall not agree to it whatever the Government might pass over our heads. That is the test by which we are going to look at this measure. I share in full, Sir, the apprehensions that have been expressed so eloquently by my friend Pandit Malaviya[5] and by Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas[6] about this Bank and the Imperial Bank practically starving and strangling the indigenous banks of this country. I have been connected with indigenous banking in this country for the last 30 years of my life and I know what they have suffered at the hands of the Imperial Bank with all the credit balances it gets from the Government. Therefore, with two such Banks running in competition with indigenous banks, really the desire of the Government to develop indigenous banks and to provide more banking facilities for the country people becomes almost nominal, a farce. The Imperial Bank will still be financed with Government balances. I do not agree with Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas that the Imperial Bank is no longer going to have any help from the Indian Treasury. The Bill as passed by the Joint Committee still provides for large sums of money being given to the Imperial Bank for the next 20 years to come, free of all interest. Well, that gives them a substantial advantage over the indigenous banks. That advantage when coupled with the provision that all indigenous banks shall have to place a certain amount of their deposits in this Reserve Bank, will show how completely the indigenous banks will be hard hit in competition with these two Banks. The Imperial Bank is going to be the favourite child of the Government for 20 years to come in the matter of having a large amount of Government money at its disposal without any interest and also large amounts on very very small interest. I, therefore, share the apprehensions of my Honourable friends Pandit Malaviya and Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas that indigenous banks will suffer a great deal in competition with these two Banks. I also share with them the view that perhaps it would have been better if, to start with, the new Central Bank had not been proposed. I share to a certain

extent the view of Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas and Sir John Bell[7] that perhaps it might have been a better scheme if the Reserve Bank had come in the course of natural evolution. This opinion was also expressed by such an expert journal as the *Statist* of England quoted by Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas and also in another article which appeared in one of the November issues of the *Statist.* But, Sir, perhaps we have passed beyond that stage. The Government is committed and we do not want to stand in the way of Government establishing this Bank as a Reserve Bank. We will take all these risks which have been pointed out but only subject to one condition, that the management of this Bank is going to be in the hands of a Directorate upon which there is not only a majority of Indians but a majority of elected Indians and a substantial one too, so that the Directorate may represent the people of this country in a real sense. This Bank is going to deal with Government balances. This Bank is going to deal with the currency policy of Government. This Bank is going practically to affect everyone in this country. I want to ask, Sir, if the management and control of this Bank is going to be put in the hands of the capitalists only, either Indian or foreign ? I think, Sir, it would be entirely wrong to do so. The general tax-payer, the general people of the country, must get some real representation on this Bank and a substantial representation in order to make this Bank acceptable to the people of this country.

Sir, I do not see any reason why the proposal of the Joint Committee should not be acceptable to the Government or to the other side. Some facts were stated by Pandit Malaviya relating to the banks of other countries in Europe, and the reply given by my Honourable friend Sir Alexander Murray was that there was no comparison between these countries and this country. I admit that, but the fact that those countries have responsible self-government and this country has not, makes it all the more incumbent that the popular representatives of the people in the Legislatures of this country ought to have a voice in making the Directorate of this Bank. It makes it still more necessary in the case of a perfectly irresponsible Government, and, considering that that Government, at least in our judgment, does not always represent the best interests of the country though, they may think they do perfectly honestly. I submit that the wish on this side of the House to have a voice in the

management of this Bank is perfectly reasonable and legitimate; I think the best way of satisfying the aspirations of the people in this respect is that provided by the Joint Committee[8]. At the same time, I may at once say that if the only alternative is either to have that scheme or the Bank at all, and if the Honourable the Finance Member is going to carry out his threat that if that "monstrosity" (in inverted commas) is perpetrated he would rather withdraw the Bill, we do not want to go to that extreme. We shall be prepared to accept any scheme which will give a substantial voice to a decent number of the people of this country who are interested in commerce, or otherwise in the affairs of this Bank in selecting representatives for the Directorate of this Bank. We shall be perfectly willing to agree to any such scheme. My Honourable friend Mr. Cocke said that no constructive scheme had been proposed. A constructive scheme has been put on the amendment paper but it may not be acceptable to him. I may tell him that if he or anybody else proposes any scheme which satisfies the fundamental principle I have laid down, namely, that it should give substantial representation to the people of this country, it will be acceptable to us as a compromise. We shall think that the scheme adumbrated by the Joint Committee is the. best. We stick to it for the present. But if any alternative scheme is suggested and agreed to we are prepared to accept it. I can say on behalf of the Members on this side that we are not going to wreck this Bill simply because the Government are not prepared to accept the scheme agreed to by the Joint Committee. I may say one thing quite boldly. If our views are going to be set aside and our point of view is not going to be considered in regard to the Directorate of this Bank, no one on this side will be a party to the passing of the Bill. You can pass it over our heads but we shall not agree to it and we shall make a point of carrying on this agitation as long as our views are not accepted. Therefore, it is best to accept the scheme which has already been accepted by the Joint Committee. It does not make any national or racial distinctions which are not acceptable to everybody. It places all on an equal footing by providing a general electorate on general principles. There seems, therefore, to be absolutely no reason why that scheme should not be acceptable. If on the other hand it is insisted that the places of these people who were to be elected by the Legislatures according to the Joint Committee's Report are going to be filled up

by nomination or by some other device which is not acceptable to this part of the House then I assert that this will not be acceptable to us. This is the fundamental principle to which we on this side of the House adhere. The rest is not so important. You can change it as you wish by agreement with us ; but on this point we shall not accept any compromise short of what I have stated. That is what I wanted to make quite clear.

I just want to add one thing more. I understood from Sir Alexander Murray's speech yesterday that in Australia there was no Government Bank. I do not know whether that was a slip in his argument. I have before me a complete statement of the history of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia given in the *Statist* of November. The history shows that from its very inception it has been a Government Bank.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett : As Sir Alexander Murray is not present may I interrupt on his behalf and say that he did not say that it was not a Government Bank ; he said that the Commonwealth Bank has not been a Central Bank.

Lala Lajpat Rai : Well, Sir, I may say that the crucial test for a comparison of these Banks with that in the measure before us is their power of issuing bank notes and the conduct of Government business. Both these tests are complied with in the case of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, which has been in existence for a number of years. All its profits go to the Government. There are no shareholders and in fact it is stated that it was the first Government Bank to be established in the British Empire. So, as against the arguments based on the Bank of England, we have here a Bank in existence in an important part of the British Empire conducted by Government with Government money the profits of which go entirely to the national exchequer. So it is not correct to say that it is not a Government Bank. Under these circumstances I hope the Honourable the Finance Member will not force us to the extremity of voting against him. We are perfectly willing to meet him as much as we can, and I appeal to him not to raise on a measure like this, the great deal of excitement and discontent that was created by the heated controversy over the ratio. In regard to this measure we must come to some agreement by which these points of difference may be satisfactorily settled, so that the most important and fundamental points may be carried out by mutual agreement. Otherwise,

Sir, he is perfectly at liberty with his majority to carry any measure he likes ; but if it is not acceptable to us it shall be our bounden duty to carry on an agitation against the measure as long as our requirements in that direction are not satisfied. This is not a small measure. It has been said by several Members that it is a very important measure affecting the economic prosperity of this country very materially. We have so far had no share in the development of the economic and fiscal policy of the Government of India. From time to time the Government of India itself has been fighting with the Secretary of State, and, as Mr. Kelkar[9] has said, we welcome this measure simply because we think that after the Secretary of State is divested of some of his power, the centre of gravity will shift to the Government of India. But we do not even want to have the Government of India fully independent of the popular control in the economic and currency policy of the country. On other points, I do not want to take up the time of the House because when they come to be discussed there will be plenty of people capable of dealing with them . But on these two points I want to make it absolutely clear that we shall not under any circumstances accept the shareholders' bank, and under no circumstances can we agree to any scheme which does not give a majority of elected Indian Members on the Directorate of the Bank.

32. DISAPPROVAL OF INSULTS TO RELIGIONS

I REGRET I cannot support the Honourable Mr. Belvi in the motion which he has made.[1] (Hear, hear.) I do not admit that this is a panicky legislation, though I do hold that this is a legislation which has arisen out of an emergency. If a measure like this had been introduced into this House in ordinary times, I would have considered it my duty to oppose it. In my judgment, considered on its merits it is a retrograde measure ; but considering the special circumstances in which we are placed at the present moment I think the proposed measure is a necessity and I therefore support its principle. In doing so I want to make my position clear. I want to submit that as soon as I heard of the decision of the High Court of the Punjab in the *Rangila Rasul* case[2], I lost no time in saying that, although, technically, the writer of the *Rangila Rasul* had been acquitted and the judgment was right in law, yet morally he was guilty. With your permission, Sir, I wish to read to the House what I wrote and what was published in *The People*, of Lahore, dated the 29th May 1927 :

"Technically the decision of the learned judge is correct. The judgment is a triumph for freedom of religious propaganda. But I have no doubt in my mind that morally the publication was a

This short speech was delivered by Lala Lajpat Rai on 5 September 1927 in the Central Legislative Assembly during the consideration of the Criminal Law Amending Bill (1927), which was introduced with the object of strengthening Chapter XV of the Indian Penal Code in regard to punishment of offences involving insults to religions or outraging the religious feelings of various classes of the Indian people. The Bill provided for the insertion of a new section in Chapter XV which made it a specific offence to insult the religion or attempt to outrage the religious feelings of any class of Indian people. The Bill received full support from Lajpat Rai but he declined to serve on the Select Committee on the Bill because of his other preoccupations.

mistake. In these days of intensive communal tension it is nothing short of a moral crime to publish books of this kind. I am not quite sure if it is not bad to publish books of this kind at any time... But general moralising apart, this is pre-eminently a time when the followers of different religions in India should avoid all provocative propaganda. Of all religious propaganda, disrespectful criticism of the founders of religious systems is the most offensive and objectionable. That the statements are true or authoritative is no defence. May I appeal to Mahashe Rajpal to withdraw the publication from circulation and may I appeal to the leaders of the Arya Samaj to see that publications of this kind are not encouraged ?"

I go further. Sir, and am prepared to use strong language against the writers of books of the kind of *Rangila Rasul* and *Unnisween Saddi Ka Maharishi.*[3] I realise the dangerous character of books of that kind in the present circumstances of the country. I do not defend their publication at any time and under any circumstances, but particularly at this time when we are confronted with a terrible situation, I consider that all persons who indulge in this kind of propaganda, are nothing but enemies of the country. I wish to make no excuse for them and I do not want to qualify my remarks in any way. I think publications and books of this kind ought to be discouraged and suppressed by all possible means, moral or legal, or both inclusive. Having said that, Sir, I am not quite sure if the language of the clause as drafted is not wide enough to cover, unless properly explained, even legitimate criticism or historical research. I do not agree with the interpretation of Section 153 which the Honourable the Home Member has put on it. To my mind, that section is absolutely clear and it does not cover the cases which are provided for by this clause by any stress of language or interpretation. Take, for example the case of those people who criticise their own religion, I mean the religion in which they have been born and the religious society in which they move. No progress is possible unless legitimate criticism is freely allowed and fully protected. The Honourable the Home Member in his speech gave a long explanation of the measure now under consideration and quoted the analogous provisions of the English law. But in this country we have to be a little more careful because it cannot but be recognised that social reform is very much tied down with religious reform, and, with the interpretation of religious texts. Therefore, the law should

not be so worded as to make it impossible for those who want social reform, and who want to carry on social reform propaganda. It should be, as has been suggested by my Honourable friend Mr. Abdul Haye[4], made clear either by an explanation added or by any change of language in the proposed clause, that *bonafide* criticism, historical research, and all that leads to the interpretation of religious texts in such a way as to lead to progressive reform in social matters will not be affected by the provisions of this clause. I do not agree with my friend Mr. Abdul Haye in saying that insults to religious founders do not come within the purview of this clause. Insults against religious founders are not directed against their personality. If the intention is to outrage the feelings of the followers of these religious founders, then the clause covers it. But if he or anybody else in the Select Committee wishes to provide anything further to stop scurrilous criticism of religious personalities. he will have my entire support. I may go a step further and say boldly that the Hindu community will welcome this measure most of all, in preference to all other communities. I have many reasons for saying this, but I do not want to go into them. For a long time the Hindus had absolutely no intention of going in for any proselytizing propaganda. If at the present moment some sections of the Hindu community are engaged in proselytizing propaganda, as I understand it, it is more as a defensive measure than an active propaganda for conversions. However, I do not want to go into that question, but I do want to assert on the floor of this House that the Hindu community as such will not object to any provision being made in the criminal law of the land which would make the intentional insult of religion or the intentional insult of high religious personages an offence. Therefore, to me there does not appear to be any necessity of circulating this measure for opinions. It is a measure which has arisen out of certain special circumstances and I think it ought to be passed as speedily as may be possible.

While I give my entire and whole-hearted support to this measure considering the circumstances of the times, I just want to repeat that care should be taken in the Select Committee to so word the law as to make it safe for those people who indulge in *bonafide* criticism or who make historical research about religious matters, That ought to be clearly understood,

Sir, after having said this, I just want to suggest to the Honourable the Home Member that the name of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya might be substituted in place of mine, because I may not be able to attend the meetings of the Select Committee. I have his permission to say so.[5]

33. THE POLITICAL SITUATION

I. English Socialism a Huge Mockery

THANKS TO the foolishness and bungling of the Tory Government, the political situation in India shows remarkable signs of revival. It has roused a cry for unity, for such concerted action as will tell. It is natural that different persons should make different proposals for handling it and for utilising it to the best advantage. It is a matter for sincere joy that the Government in England has made no change in its scheme of the Commission[1]. On the other hand, the speeches made by the Secretary of State[2] in the House of Lords and the Under Secretary[3] in the House of Commons contain nothing that should have come as a surprise to any one well versed in British Political history. Nor has the speech made by Ramsay MacDonald[4] surprised me. They are all brilliant men, masters of their language, extremely clever tacticians, astute diplomats, "statesmen" to the core of their hearts and wonderful opportunists. Birkenhead and Ramsay MacDonald are amongst the cleverest Englishmen of their time. Ramsay MacDonald is not a favourite in the Labour Party. They know that he is only a Socialist of a sort. He plays his game very cleverly but he deceives no one. If it were possible for them to have another chief who would command respect in the country and in Europe, they would at once displace him. But he is the only man in their ranks who is fit to be the head of a Government. The English are conservative by nature and tradition. They only change when the change becomes inevitable. They are still of the bourgeoisie temperament. They have a traditional respect for men who are good writers. Oratory, though its nature and kind have changed, still holds its sway in Great Britain.

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The Great War proved, beyond a shadow of doubt that the Socialism of Europe was not even skin-deep. That the Socialists of Europe, with a few exceptions, were not only nationalists but that, in their heart of hearts, they worshipped power over other peoples ; that they were not opposed to the exploitation of the weaker people and that in their actual tendencies, they were both Imperialists and bourgeoisie. Before the War, Germany was the greatest Socialist State. The Emperor[5] had the clear-sightedness to see that for the safety of his rule he must compromise with Socialism. A born despot, a thorough Imperialist both by nature and choice, a hereditary monarch, a believer in aristocracy and a hater of common things, he yet thought that the path of wisdom and safety lay in humouring Socialism and in sharing power and profits with the people. He therefore let his Parliament and Government Socialise the State as much as it was possible and safe to do. His was a Socialist Militarism. He believed in Militarism. Imperialism was the breath of his life. He was a real live Emperor. He wielded the greatest power that the head of an enlightened and Parliament-ruled nation could possibly possess. His power as Emperor was much greater than that of the King of England, or the head of any other State in the world except perhaps the Tzar of Russia. Yet he was shrewd enough to play with Socialism. In the beginning of 1914 there was no other State in the world which had accepted and adopted so many Socialistic schemes as were actually in operation in Germany. Germany had perhaps the largest number of Socialists in her population. That accounts for the Socialist Revolution that expelled the Kaiser, abolished the monarchy, and established the Republic. Republican Germany is as much Imperialist today as Great Britain or France, and so is the United States. In all these countries Socialism and Republicanism is only meant for home consumption. It is not an article for export. It is used to delude other people and win their moral support.

The same is the case with Great Britain. Great Britain never was, has never been, and I am afraid, will never be genuinely Socialistic. It is Imperialistic from top to bottom. In all countries there is a certain percentage of people who are transparently honest, and mean what they say. They have no ambitions beyond the dissemination of truth and the establishment of a reign of peace and goodwill all over the world. They possess the necessary strength of

will and character to stand to their guns in the hour of trial and temptation. There are others who are honest enough as long as there is no temptation to beguile them from the path of rectitude. The majority, however, are only time-servers, charlatans and hold opinions which are only means to an end. There are some, no doubt, who change their opinions and views by experience or by conviction. In England the early pioneers of Socialism were also honest. The Socialism of most of them was, however, tinged with Nationalism. But their nationalism was Imperialistic. To this class belonged Hyndman. Keir Hardie, was one in whose honesty and conviction one could have absolute faith. That man was pure gold. He had not the literary finish or the gift of the garb of a Ramsay MacDonald, but he had a transparent steadfastness of conviction and character. He had no ambition beyond that of serving humanity and being true to the real genuine good of the world. Without meaning any offence to any one, I can boldly say that Great Britain has not produced another man who was more honest, more truthful more consistently just and noble than Keir Hardie. The present Labour party does not perhaps possess one member who could be compared with him. Lansbury is perhaps the best of the lot, but he is so weak and slippery, I have lost faith in him. I hope he will pardon me for my plain speaking as I still respect him and value his friendship.

The one great aim in the life of the present day Socialist leaders of Great Britain was to get into power. The one great test of a genuine Socilalist is his views on Imperialism and his conduct towards the victims of Imperialism. No true Socialist will care for power and will retain it for a minute, if he cannot enforce his principles at least gradually. But if you find that the greatest concern of a so-called Socialist is to gain power and to retain it by practices which constitute the antithesis of Socialism, then all you can say is that the Socialism of such a man is, really speaking, only a ladder for his ambition. Socialists are men after all. To think that mere belief in Socialism will convert them into saints is absurd. Even Christ said, 'Oh Lord, save me from temptation ! The Indian *rishis* have said it again and again that a man ought not to be judged by his professions or beliefs, but by his conduct and practices. They have, therefore, laid it down as a rule of life that beliefs must be subjected to discipline and test—*sadhanas* and *tapas*—there is no chance for a

frail human being to be and to remain straight. The West does not accept this doctrine of *sadhana.* They believe in discipline, but discipline is not always *tapa,* nor is it always *sadhana.* Hence we find that a European, whether Socialist or democrat, does not care to strengthen himself against temptation. Moreover, a Europeon hardly ever speaks without reservations.

Political life in Europe is not, has never been, and will never be straight. Everyone in Europe rails against Machiavelli, but I have yet to find out a European statesman who does not follow Machiavellian methods and does not practise Machiavellian principles.

Great Britain and British statesmen, Tory, Labour, and Liberal, are no exception to it. Principles have some application, though only limited to the affairs of the home country. As for countries abroad, they have no application at all. Even in home affairs, party interests are the first consideration. But in the affairs of the rest of the world only one thing counts, *viz.*, the interests of Great Britain, as against others. All parties are united in their desire to keep India out of party politics. Why ? The reason is simple. No party of British politicians favours freedom of India from the British yoke. In 1905 when I first visited England, the Labour party and Labour politicians did not count for much. It was the Liberal party on whom Indian politicians relied. They wanted to identify themselves with the Liberal party, but the latter did not reciprocate the wish. I think it would be relevant to quote what I then wrote after my return to India:

"These latter (*i.e.* the Liberals) are in substantial agreement with the Conservatives in keeping Indian affairs out of party politics. At the discussion of the last Budget in June there was only one influential liberal (Sir Charles Dilke) who spoke in favour of Mr. Herbert Robert's motion for a Parliamentary enquiry. The other leading Liberals went in a body against it. You have only to be a few days in England to come to the conclusion that the liberal executive is as indifferent to Indian affairs as the Conservatives and that as a party the Liberals are not prepared to receive your advances. For the time being some of them may utilise you for party purposes in those matters in which they differ from their rivals, the Tories, but beyond that they will not go. As such, it is futile to discuss the wisdom or the non-wisdom of indentifying the Congress with the

Liberals as a party. The question is, at present, outside the range of practical politics. Though it were possible to do so, I would rather have the Indian affairs fought and discussed on party lines. So far I am quite in agreement with Sir Pherozeshah Mehta. Any one even slightly acquainted with the political life in England will tell you that, as a rule, English politicians are not prepared to devote any time and attention to any matters which do not further party interests."

But I did say that "if there is any class in England which deserves our confidence and upon whose votes we can place any reliance at all it is the Labour party, including the democrats and the Socialists and the Irish of course." The position which the Liberal party occupied in English politics in 1905 is now occupied by the Labour party and their practices and their policy towards India are exactly the same as those of the Liberal party of 1905. I see no difference.

II. Labour Party Under Imperialistic MacDonald

I have been in close touch with the Labour leaders and Socialists of England ever since 1905. I have good friends amongst them whose personal friendship has always been a source of strength and pleasure to me. I have personally known Mr. MacDonald since 1910 when he paid his first visit to India. I followed his activities during the War with keen interest and admired him for the bold stand he made against the War.[6] For a number of years he was persecuted for his views on that question and kept out of Parliament. He never lost heart and persevered. It is strange now to hear him talk of party discipline. During the War he was a rebel against his party. The party was for War. He was against it. The party gave two members to the War Cabinet. He preached pacifism and worked against them. But his views on the Indian question underwent a radical change from the time he became a member of the Public Service Commission. Even an extremely reasonable and moderate Indian like the late Mr. G. K. Gokhale was dissatisfied with the change in Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's views regarding India. The fact is that, although born in an humble position and a Socialist, by education and training, Mr. MacDonald's heart is Imperialist through and through. His mental attitude is that of a bourgeois. Nor is he altogther free from racial or religious bias.

In my life-time I have come across a number of people who, though most democratic and liberal or rather radical in theory were unable to throw off the racial or religious bias inherited by them or imposed on them by their environments. When in the U.S.A., I met many such men—Professors and teachers in the universities, eminent writers and publicists, socialists and democrats. The whole structure of their liberalism fell to the ground when it came into the slightest contact with their prejudice against the coloured people. Of some of them I enquired why it was so. The reply invariably was "Oh ! the American Negro was different. He had been a slave. It was impossible to mix with him on equal terms." Mr. Ramsay MacDonald has risen from an humble position. He has been an ardent Socialist. He is an accomplished writer and speaker. He is sincerely desirous of peace in Europe and among the white races. His attitude, however, towards the coloured people, particularly towards Indians, has never been other than that of an Imperialist. His best friends are of the same mind. He is never happy with men of the type of Lansbury and Wedgwood[7]. In his mentality he is worse than even a Fabian. A Fabian starts with things as they are and wants proofs that they have changed. A Fabian has nothing to do with right and wrong. A true Fabian has no prejudices on the ground of religion or colour. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald is, however, a Christian of the ordinary missionary type. He begins with presumptions against non-Christians and non-Europeans. His mind does not go to the root of things. He wants power and rank to establish peace in Europe, among the white races. About India and China he does not care much. Goaded by members of his party, he is sometimes forced to say pleasant things, I mean, pleasant from the Indian point of view.

But he always speaks with reservations. He is always halting and hesitating. His best weapon is delay. In this respect he is not even as good as Gladstone. He is more like Morley. Gladstone's thought often soared high. Morley was and MacDonald is incapable of rising above what they believed to be the logic of facts. Their world is a world of logic and of promises. They are the devotees of facts as they are or as they are represented to them. They can never rise to moral or spiritual heights. Men like these can never do anything for the victims of Imperialistic or Capitalistic aggression. In their heart of hearts, they believe in the *laissez faire* ;

though by lips they may say differently. I do not charge Mr. Ramsay MacDonald with hypocrisy, though as a statesman he is as much addicted to diplomatic methods and ways as any other statesman in Europe. India has no faith in him and can have no reason to base her hopes on him. The day when the Labour Government was formed in 1924 was a red letter day in the history of Labour in Great Britain. They had been dreaming of it and their dreams were realised. Their sole concern was to prove that even Labour could look after the Empire and was 'respectable'. Their principles and professions were scattered to the winds. All their policy was guided by one consideration, *viz.*, what effect it would have on the prospects of Labour at the next elections. The most important offices in the Cabinet were given to men in whose respectability Mr. MacDonald had faith. Most of the Labour leaders who were raised to the Cabinet rank in 1924 are Tories in the garb of Socialists.

The India Office was given to a man who knew nothing about India, had no position in the party and had no reputation for brilliance, either in administration or in clear thinking. Even then his powers were curtailed. A Cabinet Committee was appointed to advise him or virtually to control him, a procedure unheard of in the case of a first class Minister. Just compare the position of Lord Olivier in the Labour party then or now with that of Lord Birkenhead among the Tories and you can easily find the difference between Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's conception of responsibility towards India and that of Mr. Baldwin[8]. India was easy to be governed. There was a 'steel-frame' to look after it. No immediate changes were required. India and Indian leaders could be put on the waiting list. They were actually put on that list—deliberately, by design, and by policy. The plea was that Labour was in office, but not in power. There was some truth in that statement. But mostly it was an eye-wash. The plea lacked sincerity. If fundamental changes in the constitution of the Government of India could not be made, minor reforms could certainly have been introduced, which would have gone a long way to ameliorate the sufferings of India. Nothing was done. The India Office was nominally ruled by a Fabian but actually controlled by an Imperialist. Nothing was done or could be done without consulting the Premier, or those whom he had appointed to look after Lord Olivier, among whom was Lord Chelmsford. Expectations were deliberately created in the minds

of Indian leaders and promises made which were never fulfilled.

The crowning service of the Labour Government to India was the sanctioning of the policy of renewed repression in Bengal by the issue of the Ordinance and by application of that old weapon, Regulation III of 1818[9]. I am aware of the defence which Lord Olivier has made of that iniquitous policy, but no reasonable man has ever been convinced of the soundness of that measure or of the necessity thereof. The Labour party has so far, both in theory and in practice, declined to bring India into party politics, for the simple reason that they have no Indian policy to make it a party policy. They pass resolutions in party conferences which are thrown into the waste-paper basket soon after. As long as the Labour party maintains this attitude towards India, there is no hope from that quarter. The other day an English "friend" of the Indian cause called on me. He is a Quaker by faith. Yet he talked as if he was convinced of the truth of Miss Mayo's allegations and believed that England was well-disposed towards India and the English ruled India for the good of the latter. This is the usual English mentality. The men possessing that mentality are honest in their convictions. Their convictions are the result of their faith in their countrymen. They are more patriotic than just. I do not blame them for that mentality. But under the circumstances it is futile to place our hopes on any English friends, though it will be foolish to quarrel with them and call them names.

It was never truer than now that those who want liberty, must themselves strike for it. But the 'blow' must be conditioned by the circumstances of the people who want freedom. The history of other countries may be a useful guide in certain respects, but it cannot be repeated. The battle of freedom must be fought with different weapons by different peoples according to their own means and circumstances. Analogies are sometimes defective and comparisons misleading. I do not mind failures, provided the fundamentals of the efforts are based on a true appreciation of realities and possibilities. Soaring high on principles, regardless of the realities, is sometimes criminal. It misdirects the energies of a nation and leads it into wrong paths. It creates distrust and suspicion of each other among the fighters themselves. It is absolutely essential, therefore, that the programme for freedom should be based on a fairly correct estimate of the realities and possibilities of the situation.

It should be neither over-estimated nor under-estimated. It should be neither bluff nor subservience. It should be well conceived and well arranged, then put into operation with zeal and a spirit to conquer or die. It should have nothing to do with fads. It should be a policy of idealistic practicability. Let us now examine the situation and lay out a programme.

III. Our Immediate Programme of Work

Having made it clear that India could place no reliance in any of the three British political parties, I propose to consider in this article what our immediate programme of work should be.

(1) The country has pronounced in favour of a complete boycott of the Royal Statutory Commission that is coming to India. This is as it should be. Some Indians believe that the boycott will be very injurious to the interests of the country ; others, that it will be harmful to the Hindu or Muslim interests as such. Colonel Wedgwood's letter on the subject, published in the *People* of the 8th December, should help Indians to think more clearly in the matter. I entirely agree with Colonel Wedgwood that no amount of evidence given before or representations made to the Commission would make the slightest difference in the recommendations that are likely to be made. In the case of most of these Commissions the decisions are made before the Commissions are appointed. Evidence is only taken in order to support those decisions. Take, for instance, the case of the Currency Commission[10]. The Commission only endorsed the decisions of the Government of India, which were those of Sir Basil Blackett. The evidence taken by the Commission did not alter the decisions to any substantial extent. I have no doubt that the Secretary of State for India and the Premier have already made up their minds as to the principles on which the Constitution of India is to be made or altered. They have before them the Government of India Act of 1919, the Muddiman Committee reports[11] and the confidential reports of the various Local Governments and the Government of India. They have before them the resolutions of the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha as well as those of the Indian National Congress. As regards the Untouchables, the Adi Hindus and Labour they have already shown their solicitude for the first two. Now will any one tell me how he will advance the interests of the country or of his community by giving evidence before the Commission ?

I know some gentlemen are very anxious to appear as witnesses and to figure in their respective provinces as great champions of their respective communities. One Hindu M.L.C. of the Punjab told me that he was very anxious to show to the Commission how Punjab officials had been injuring Hindus by always throwing their votes with the Muslim block. This gentleman evidently expects the Commission to condemn this action of the Punjab officials. If so, he is completely mistaken. The Muslim policy in the Punjab has been and is the policy of the Government. It is the official block that has the determining voice. It is the Chief Secretary and his supporters that rule. The rest of the Punjab Legislative Council is merely an ornamental thing. Does Mr.... think that the Local Government or the Central Government or the Secretary of State or the Commission do not know this and require to be told of it by him ? The facts of the situation are so patent that no evidence is needed to embellish them either this way or that. The Hindus of the Punjab are represented in the Punjab Legislative Council according to their population. What more can they possibly have ? Sikhs have got more than they are entitled to by virtue of their numbers. They claim one third because of their historical, political and military importance.

The Muslims claim a clear majority according to their population. Will any one enlighten us how these cases are going to be improved by the oral testimony of Pandit or Lala so and so and Sir or Maulvi so and so ? The chances are that they will be undone in cross-examination. Muslims particularly will run a great risk by appearing as witnesses before this Commission. They have been in power in this province ever since 1921 when the Reforms were put into operation. It is in the nature of things that the Government or the party in power should have many mistakes or grievances on their debit side. It will be the business of the Commission to bring these mistakes into prominence in their cross-examination. There is many a skeleton in the cupboard of each administration. Are the Muslims of the Punjab anxious that these skeletons should be brought into limelight ? Why can't they let them rest where they are ? Their claim is that they should get a majority in the local Council with provincial autonomy. Do they think that their evidence will help them in their objective ? If so, they are mistaken. The articles, recently published in the *Civil and Military Gazette*, the local organ of the Punjab bureaucracy, ought to leave them in no doubt about

that matter. If there is any province where the majority will worsen its case by laying too much stress on it, it is the Punjab. The case of Bengal stands on a different footing, though perhaps in certain respects it is even worse.

Hindus, on the other hand, cannot say anything more than what Raja Narendra Nath and Professor Gulshan Rai[12] have already put in black and white and which is on Government file. The same may be said about Sikhs. Beyond the satisfaction of personal vanities, nothing is likely to be gained by any party by giving evidence before the Commission. If there was ever a Commission before which any evidence tendered or given would be perfectly useless for any purposes of advance, that Commission is this. As already said the materials for their report have already been collected or in some provinces which started late are now being collected. Tentative decisions have already been taken. The Commission has only to write its report. The Commission is after all only an advisory body, as has been pointed out by Colonel Wedgwood. Sir John Simon is an eminent lawyer. Lawyers are the last persons to decide questions of policy in a spirit of statesmanship. He will only say whether in his opinion the Reforms inaugurated by the Act of 1919 have worked well.

It is not a judicial enquiry that we want. We have no dispute with the Government which can be settled on the basis of evidence. Our claim is based on natural rights and the onus of proving that we are not entitled to those rights is on our opponents. Those who desire to appear as witnesses before the Statutory Commission can only help the bureaucracy in discharging that onus in the absence of Indian members on the Commission, they cannot help India. Such is the situation. Is it too much to hope, then, that wiser counsels will still prevail and the various Hindu and Muslim leaders will not allow themselves to be used as tools for the game of the bureaucracy?

The Anglo-Indian, official or non-official, is too astute a diplomat to agitate for the hearty co-operation of Indians with the Commission, if they had any doubt as to the final recommendations of the Commission. Will they be so anxious to collect evidence against themselves? Will they ask you to furnish material to the Commission if they knew or suspected that such material was likely to be used against them, or for the purposes of reducing their powers and prestige. They are quite sure of their position. They know already

what the Commission is likely to report. Has not the *Daily Telegraph*, whose proprietor is a member of the Commission, been all along agitating against the right of Indians to self-government ? Has it not been all the time throwing reflection on the capacity or fitness of India for representative institutions ? Indians ! don't be fools. I was once arguing a case before a Bench of the Punjab Chief Court in 1899. One of the judges, a very clever European barrister, told my opponent that he was, by his arguments, cutting the throat of his client. I am afraid Indians who appear as witnesses before the Simon Commission, will be doing the same. My opponent, of course, lost his case and these witnesses will be equally sorry because they will surely lose their case. How many lawyers advise their clients, no witnesses ! Sometimes the best interests of a client justify that advice and that is the advice we, who have had experience of political tactics of the four continents within the last forty years, can give to our countrymen regarding this Commission. This is not sentimental talk. This is pure commonsense and real politics. As for sentiment, there is no doubt that the Government has heaped the greatest possible insult on India by excluding Indians from the Commission. Our *amour propre* has no doubt been very much hurt. But what *amour propre* can we have ? We should have swallowed the insult if we could be sure that co-operation with the Commission was likely to be useful to our country. I hope the Legislative Assembly will refuse to appoint a Select Committee to co-operate with the Commission and so will the Legislative Councils. So far about the Commission.

(2) Some of my countrymen, however, do not propose to remain contented with a boycott of the Commission. They want to do more. Some have proposed an abstention from the active work of the Assembly and the Councils, without resigning their seats. In my judgment this will be a total mistake. In the Assembly and the Councils we cannot do much positive good, but we can prevent a great deal of mischief.

Let us take the case of the Assembly. It consists of 140 members, 40 of whom constitute the official and nominated block. Add to these the 12 European non-officials. The Nationalists are divided into three parties, the Congress, the Nationalist and the Independent. I am certain that the Independent party will not agree to this course. I am almost certain that the majority of the

Nationalist party also will not agree. This will be going against our election pledges. Even the Congress party members have in some cases given that pledge. But even if that were not so, what will be the effect of their abstention from attendance except that the hands of the Government and the reactionaries will be strengthened and they will succeed in passing measures like the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1926.[13] I will beg of my countrymen to be more practical in their politics. If there are any among the members of the Assembly who consider it *infra dig* to be there, or who think they can do more useful work outside (as some of them certainly can) they should vacate their seats after the winter session and let others take their places. That will be commonsense. But to follow a policy of abstention in the present circumstances will be fatal to the true interests of the country. On the other hand, I wish the members to feel that they can be loyal to their constituencies and true to themselves only if they make it a point not to be absent from the Assembly even for an hour. These absences are sometimes extremely harmful to the popular cause. Members who for private reasons, cannot attend the sittings of the Assembly, ought to resign. But non-attendance is inexcusable. Several times during this year the Government won victories over us because of the absence of our members. In my humble judgment, members who make light of their duty in this respect, do a great wrong to their constituents.

What I have said about the Assembly is equally applicable to the Councils. Whether in majority or in a minority, it is our duty to be in our places and do what we can for our country and constituents. This kind of talk gives an excuse to those persons who think absence pays them better. They retain the dignity of being M.L.A.s without paying the price of it. In this respect I cannot hold out to them a better example than that of Mr. M.A. Jinnah who never misses a sitting if he can help it. Surely he does so at great sacrifice. If he thought the sacrifice was not worth making, neither he nor Mr. Jayakar would sit there from day to day only to find that their work is rather of a negative kind.

(3) My revered friend, Pandit M. M. Malaviya, has proposed "non-payment of taxes" and "boycott of British goods" in case the British Government refused to give us responsible government according to our scheme by January, 1930. With all my deference for him, both the proposals are impracticable. Non-payment of

taxes on an all-India basis is an impossible scheme. It cannot succeed. Non-payment of taxes in selected local areas for certain local grievances is always thinkable and worthy of consideration. But non-payment of taxes on general political grounds has never been adopted in any country. In a country like India with so many diverse interests, it is unthinkable.

(4) Boycott of all British goods is also impracticable. What we should do is to concentrate on the boycott of foreign cloth and also to carry on a propaganda for the boycott of British ships, British banks, British insurance companies and such other British institutions as exploit us. Mr. Taisee's[14] insolent speech at the Calcutta St. Andrews dinner should be met by a complete breaking of all social and commercial relations with the class which he represents. If that is not practicable, then we should stop talking big and take to humbler pursuits in the way of nation-building. Let us remember that famous advice of Parnell to his countrymen, "*We shall never permit outsiders for an instant to be tempted beyond our strength.*" Let us do everything that is necessary to cultivate strength, put our house in order, settle our differences, put ourselves under discipline and take to a life of purity and simplicity. Then we can do what strength justifies. Then a little straining of it even won't matter. But under the present circumstances to talk big is only to prove our helplessness and help in creating an atmosphere of depression and dissensions. Some friends talk of obstruction. They have tried it and failed. To try it again would be nothing short of foolhardiness. Discriminate obstruction is the only thing sensible and practicable. Let us keep to our sheet anchor, *i.e.*, the good of our country.

34. BOYCOTT SIMON COMMISSION—SPEECH IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

I RISE TO move the Resolution that stands in my name and I do so with the profoundest sense of responsibility that I have ever felt in the discharge of any public duty. I shall at the beginning give very briefly and categorically my reasons for the action that I am taking. My first reason is that I have no faith in the *bona fides* of the Government or of the people who have appointed this Commission. Why I have no faith in them, I shall state later on. My second reason is that I have no faith in the competency of the Commission that has been appointed. I acknowledge, Sir, that Sir John Simon is one of the ablest members of the British nation and I give the members of the Commission[1] the fullest possible credit for their good intentions and good motives. But the very fact which has been made a ground of their appointment, namely, their ignorance of India, Indian history and Indian politics, is, in my judgment, their greatest disqualification to enter upon the task which has been entrusted to them. The problem of India is so vast and so complicated that even if the gods were to descend from the heavens,

Speech delivered by Lala Lajpat Rai on 16 February 1928 in moving his Resolution for the boycott of the Indian Statutory Commission appointed by the British Government in 1927 under the Chairmanship of Sir John Simon to enquire into the question of constitutional reforms for India. The Resolution read :

"This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council to inform His Majesty's Government that the present Constitution and the scheme of the Statutory Commission are wholly unacceptable to this House and that this House will therefore have nothing to do with the Commission at any stage or in any form,"

The Resolution received overwhelming support from the non-official elected members and was carried by 68 to 62 votes.

they cannot master it in such a short time as is at the disposal of this Commission. Sir, the members of the Commission cannot in this short space of time make any intelligent recommendations which may be acceptable both to England and to India. My impression is that all that the Commission will do will be practically recording in a gramophone what they will be told by the bureaucracy here and eventually they will be recording in another gramophone their recommendations in consultation with some other people in England. The very secretive methods which they are employing even now at the present moment in going about their business justify me in making this statement. They are very much afraid of going out in public and informing the people of their movements. They move from place to place in secrecy and a mystery is surrounding them. That in itself shows that the people who guide them will practically choose what they want to place before them. My third ground for the action which I am taking is that I have no faith in any Commission's ability to settle the Indian problem. I can understand Commisions being appointed for inquiry into facts which are disputed or which are not clear but I question the competency of any Commission to settle the fitness of nations to rule themselves (applause from the non-official Benches) and to settle constitutions for them which have to be worked by them in their own interests. In my judgment the problem of India is not for Commissions, it must be tackled by representative men both from England and India in a spirit of conciliation and negotiations (Hear, hear!). It is only then that it may be possible to solve this problem by an agreement which may eventually be ratified by Parliament.

Sir, we on this side of the House, who have been taking that position, have been very much misrepresented about our attitude towards the Parliament. It has been said that we do not realise the realities and that we ignore the fact that the Parliament is the primary and ultimate arbiter of the destinies of India. Sir, their responsibility may be ultimate, but it is not primary. I do not concede that proposition. My own idea is that we have never, even on this side of the House, said that we propose to dictate to Parliament. What we said was that the settlement of the question must be approached in a spirit of mutual conciliation, of mutual understanding of the interests of the two countries, and that only on that basis could we arrive at an agreement which may be acceptable to both parties and

may be automatically sanctioned by Parliament. I use the word "automatically", because Parliament never does anything except what the Government for the time being wants it to do. Government represents the machinery of Parliament, and therefore Parliament is only in a way the machinery by which the Government for the time being carries on its business and records its decisions. If the Government for the time being enters into an agreement with the representatives of India, Parliament will automatically ratify the agreement and give effect to it. That is what we mean by saying that we should be entrusted with the task of making a constitution and then Parliament can sanction it.

Now, Sir, having given these grounds briefly, I will come to the arguments that have been given by the Secretary of State for the appointment of such a Commission[2]. The Secretary of State has told us many things. One of the things he has told us is that it is the duty of Parliament and Parliament alone to consider and decide this question. He says that Parliament took the government of the country from the East India Company, saved India from a welter of anarchy, and if today the British were to go out of India, India would again be thrown into a welter of anarchy. Unfortunately the Secretary of State's notions of anarchy and our notions of anarchy differ very much. He has spoken of the glorious and the great association of England with India. Yes, great and glorious from the British point of view, but inglorious and infamous from the Indian point of view. I do not admit the association of England with India has done us any substantial good. That is the chief point of difference between us and the Secretary of State for India.

Then he talks of a welter of anarchy. What anarchy can be greater than the anarchy of the law imposed at the point of the bayonet by a foreigner or body of foreigners ? That is the greatest anarchy which can be inflicted on any self-respecting nation. What anarchy can be greater than the anarchy involved in the position that the people for whom governments are made, for whom governments are constituted, should have no voice in the determination of their fate ? There can be no anarchy greater than that. All anarchies are followed at some time or the other by established and sound systems of government. Sir, no progress is made by threats. We are not scared by these threats of anarchy. I wish to say from my place in this House that I am not at all afraid of any anarchy that

might follow the withdrawal of the British from this country. I am prepared for the worst. What can be worse than the conditions in which we are living now ? There can be nothing worse. We have reached the lowest depths of misery and degradation imaginable. There can be nothing lower than that, and if the British Government think that by their withdrawal we shall be warring with each other, I shall welcome even that condition, because, after all, after a few years of warring and quarrelling, and even bloodshed, we shall be settling down and forming some kind of government, which will be our own handiwork, and which we can improve later on. (Laughter from the European non-official Benches.) The Members of the European group are indulging in a laugh at me. My reply is : "You can have a hearty laugh, because you are like the painter who paints his own picture. If you were in our position you would not be laughing but weeping. Let us have a trial of ruling England for even two years and then we shall see who laughs and who weeps."

Mr. K. Ahmed (Rajshahi Division : Muhammadan Rural) : But how did you rule in the days of the old Mughal Emperors and how did the British come here ? What about the Hindu-Muslim riots ?

Lala Lajpat Rai : We ruled very well. I don't care for the Hindu-Muslim riots. Don't we hear of riots in England ? As soon as we know we have to settle the question we shall settle it. It is the presence of the third party that is responsible for the riots. There is a third party behind the people who brings about these riots. Has not a responsible statesman said that the differences between the Hindus and the Muslims could be removed but for the presence of the third party. Withdraw and then see whether we quarrel. That is the easiest test. There is no use of talking like this.

Sir, I now come to the other parts of the Secretary of State's statement. The Secretary of State says that this Commission goes out to India as a kind of jury. Well, Sir, the very mention of jury connotes two parties. What is the position we occupy ? Probably in the eyes of the Secretary of State, that of defendants and accused. The Commission has come to make enquiries into our fitness for self-government. Have you ever heard of an enquiry by a jury exclusively composed of foreigners ? At least in England the

principle is that everyone must be tried by his peers. Here the jury is composed of British Members of Parliament who propose to enquire into our fitness to rule our country. Where is the analogy between this jury and a jury as is generally understood ? It is a jury as well as a judge. The Secretary of State told us that it is the British Parliament that will decide. These are members of the British Parliament, which practically means that they form part of the judicial tribunal which is going to sit in judgment on us and give the decision. They combine in themselves the functions of judge and jury. Is that the notion of justice prevailing in England ? All that talk of a jury is absolute bunkum.

Then the Secretary of State proceeds to say that this Commission is going out to India as reporters. Have you heard of a jury being reporters ? Juries don't report, they give verdicts. And then he says, well, the Constitution is laid down in the Act of 1919, and as a constitutional lawyer he thinks that that is the only course open to him. The Act only contemplates a Parliamentary Commission. Lord Birkenhead[3] may be a brilliant man, a very able man, but there is no lack of able men and brilliant men in other parts of the world. He may be a most brilliant man, because as Secretary of State his word carries weight, but there are constitutional lawyers in India as learned and as brilliant perhaps as Lord Birkenhead. (An Honourable Member : "More so.") Yes, may be more so, and in that case I submit—I leave it to my lawyer friends to discuss whether Lord Birkenhead is right in his interpretation of the constitutional law which he has put forward in the House of Lords in his speech on this question. I think he is not.

Then, Sir, Lord Birkenhead has taken other points in justification of the appointment of this purely British Commission. One of the points taken by him shows great solicitude for the depressed classes. Since when have these depressed classes come into existence ? Since when has the British Government become conscious of their existence ? Sir, it seems that they have come into existence only since 1917. Before that they did not exist. (An Honourable Member : "How ? ') I am just going to show you if you will pardon me for a minute. In August, 1917 the great announcement was made that the goal of British policy in India would be to prepare India for responsible government as an integral part of the British Empire. The Anglo-Indian community of India, official and non-official, did

not like that announcement; so it was for the first time in the educational progress report 1917-1918 that any mention was made of the depressed classes. Before that they did not exist at all for the English Government. What did the Government do? It caused a census of the depressed classes to be made at the time for the purpose of considering what progress they had made in education and what could be done for them in order to advance their cause; that was the ostensible reason. The census gave the figure as somewhere near 30 millions. In the census of 1921 the figure was raised by the Census Commissioner to 52 millions, and he stated generally that the figure was somewhere between 55 and 60 millions for the whole of India. Mr. Coatman[4], by one stroke of his pen, has raised it definitely to 60 millions, and it is these 60 millions who are now talked of by our British rulers and by the *Times* and by all those people who shed crocodile tears. May I ask what they have done for them in the past? May I ask what the British Government has done for these depressed classes during the last 150 years of their rule?

Mr. K. Ahmed: What have you done?

Lala Lajpat Rai: I will tell you what I have done. I have been working for the depressed classes for the last 25 years and even more, long before there was any mention of their representation in the Legislative Councils; and I challenge any Member on the side of the Government to tell me what they have done in the last 25 years to advance the education of the depressed classes and to do anything for their uplift. Even now, under this system, any small efforts we might make to expedite the education and progress of the depressed classes are opposed by Government everywhere. When we asked them to open public wells in the Punjab for the use of these classes they refused to do so. When we asked them to provide special scholarships for their education, they refused to accept that proposal; when a Member definitely proposed that Rs. 9 lakhs should be sanctioned for the education of the depressed classes, the Government met it with a definite "no". We asked them to open out the ranks of the Army or at least of the police to these classes and the reply of the Home Member was "No; we cannot do it in the present circumstances, because other Hindus would object to it." What then is this solicitude for depressed classes? It is all a hypocritical cry. I challenge even Mr. Rajah[5] here who belongs himself

to the depressed classes to show me from the past history of the last 25 years what the British Government have done for them. It is all eye-wash. It is we who first started this movement out of purely humanitarian and unselfish motives. We considered them part and parcel of ourselves and we have been trying to uplift them in our own humble way for the past 50 years. I have spent a great part of my time and I have given a great part of my savings in the interests of the depressed classes. Let me ask what the Government has done and what these non-official Europeans who talk so loud have done for them ? What have they done ? Will they tell me what they have done ? They have sanctioned no money for the uplift and raising of these classes ; they have sent no agents for propaganda amongst the communities for the betterment of these classes. I do not want to carry it further, Sir.........

Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum (North-West Frontier Province : Nominated Non-official) : Who created the depressed classes, Sir ?

Lala Lajpat Rai : The depressed classes were created, Sir, by a long history. (Laughter and cheers.) May I ask who created the labouring classes of England ? May I ask who created the Negroes of the United States ? May I ask who created those slaves in South Africa whom European exploiters have treated as less than men for the purpose of making their pile? What is the use of talking about the depressed classes and posing as their champions ? (Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum made an interruption.) I do not want to give way to the Honourable gentleman. This is all cant. I should say it is all absolutely hypocritical talk.

Then, Sir, it was extremely mean of Lord Birkenhead to take advantage of a stray remark made by my friend, Mr. Goswami,[6] about the representative character of the Hindu Sabha in the heat of controversy. Are we going to judge the character of the British statesmen and of the British Government by the remarks that are made against them on the floor of the House of Commons by the Labour Members ? If we were to judge them by that we should never believe a single word uttered by the Secretary of State or by the Prime Minister, because they are every day denounced as liars, robbers and dacoits. I say it was extremely mean of Lord Birkenhead. But he had no other arguments to fall back upon and therefore he quoted this remark of Mr. Goswami as a drowning

man catches at a straw. It was a mean thing to do to justify this exclusively British Commission.

Sir, I want to tell you something more. I want to tell you why I consider in the first place that we doubt the *bona fides* of the British Government which has appointed this Commission. At the time when the famous announcement of August 1917 was made, I happened to be in the United States and I happened to be in the know of all the currents and under-currents of the policies of the Allied Powers at that time. I say deliberately, with full responsibility for my words, that the announcement of 1917 was not as some have stated the outcome of a hasty or generous emotion ; I say it was a war measure, a pure war measure, never intended to give us self-government within a reasonable period of time. The statesman who made that announcement was absolutely honest, but I know that the men who drafted it were neither sincere nor honest ; they just wanted to use it as a shield or screen. The war was going against the Allied Powers in 1916. There had been disasters in Mesopotamia and after inquiry it was found that in spite of the best of goodwill, and in spite of the best efforts which the Indian Government put in to support the war, the Indian Government was inefficient for war purposes[7]. Mr. Montagu[8] from his seat in the House of Commons declared that this system of Government was too wooden, too iron, too inelastic, too anti-diluvian for modern purposes. It had prevented the Indian nation, in spite of its splendid loyalty, from being an efficient war nation, and he said if you really want to have the support of India in this war or in any future wars, you ought to tell them plainly what their position in the Government of the country will be and make a statement about your future intentions about the Government of India. You ought to appeal to their love of country which is a religion with them ; and perhaps it will be possible that in the next war, if it happened, you will find an India ready and efficient to help you in that war. I submit those words are plain enough to show that that was what Mr. Lloyd George subsequently accepted and that is why he authorised the announcement that was made in August 1917. Mr. Lloyd George had already declared the aims and objects of the war. In a speech delivered at Glasgow he had said :

"Now we are faced with the greatest and the grimmest struggle of all. Liberty, equality, fraternity, not amongst men, but amongst

nations—great and small, powerful and weak, exalted and humble,—equality, fraternity, amongst peoples as well as amongst men—that is the challenge which has been thrown to us......My appeal to the people of this country, and if my appeal can reach beyond it, is this that we should continue to fight for the great goal of international right and international justice, so that never again shall brute force sit on the throne of justice, nor barbaric strength wield the sceptre of right."

As I have already said, in 1916 the war was going against the Allies ; the United States had not entered into it and the Allies knew that the war could not be won except with the help of the United States. They wanted the United States to come in ; and the United States would not come in unless public opinion in the United States was satisfied that the aims and objects of the Allies were as pure as President Wilson put them. It was necessary to conciliate American public opinion ; it was necessary to show to the Americans that the aims and objects of the Allies were pure and that the war was being fought for world democracy and world peace. That, Sir, was the genesis of the announcement.

Sir, what has followed that announcement has amply proved to us that my contention that the announcement was not honest on the part of those men who drafted that announcement is perfectly correct. What do we see ? Immediately the tide of the war turned in favour of the Allies, even before the war had ended, what did the Government of India do ? They introduced into the Imperial Legislative Council those infamous Rowlatt Bills.[9] They showed an extreme and entire distrust of the whole of the Indian people in introducing those Bills. There was unanimous opposition to those Bills. Every one in this country was practically against those measures. But the Government of India, in defiance of all public opinion, in defiance of the wishes of all sections of the Members of Imperial Legislative Council, passed them into law. Sir, at that time my friend Mr. Jinnah, who was a Member of the Supreme Legislative Council, resigned, and he addressed a letter to the Governer-General[10] which, I think, requires to be read, because in it he depicted a position which is similar to the one we are facing to-day. Mr. Jinnah said :

"Your Excellency, the passing of the Rowlatt Bill by the Government of India and the assent given to it by Your Excellency

as Governor-General against the will of the people has severely shaken the trust reposed by them in British justice. Further, it has clearly demonstrated the constitution of the Imperial Legislative Council which is a Legislature but in name, a machine propelled by a foreign executive. Neither the unanimous opinion of the non-official Indian Members nor the entire public opinion and feeling outside has met with the least respect. The Government of India and Your Excellency, however, have thought it fit to place on the Statute-book, a measure admittedly obnoxious and decidedly coercive at a time of peace, thereby substituting executive for judicial discretion. Besides, by passing this Bill, Your Excellency's Government have actively negatived every argument they advanced but a year ago when they appealed to India for help at the War Conference, and have ruthlessly trampled upon the principles for which Great Britain avowedly fought the war."

I submit, Sir, the position of India and her Legislatures is exactly the same today as it was before the Reforms were introduced. No doubt, some opportunities have been afforded to us to talk, to talk *ad infinitum* ; some opportunities have been afforded to us to place our views before the Government. But the Legislature, the Central Legislature, is as impotent today to enforce its will, as powerless, as absolutely helpless as it was in 1919 when Mr. Jinnah wrote that letter. (Laughter!)

Sir Walter Willson (Associated Chambers of Commerce : Nominated Non-official) : What about the Reserve Bank ?

Lala Lajpat Rai : My friends talk of the Reserve Bank and they laugh. What is the Reserve Bank ? The rejection of the Reserve Bank[11] still leaves you in possession of the field. It is a case in which you wanted to enforce your will and we simply rejected it ; but our will you never accepted. What was the case with the Salt Tax ?[12] What was the case in the Princes' Protection Bill?[13] What did you do in those matters? What was your action in the Ratio Bill?[14] What have you done in connection with the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Currency ?[15] (An Honourable Member : "The Skeen Committee. [16]") Yes, I am coming to that presently. India unanimously opposed the imposition of fresh expenditure on the Indian exchequer which was forced upon her by the Lee Commission's Report[17], but you overruled

it. India has unanimously demanded a modicum of representation in the Army, and you have persistently denied it. Even now, as reports go, the unanimous recommendation of the Skeen Committee has been turned down. These, Sirs, are your credentials for your *bona fides.* I submit, Sir, the British Government in this country and the European mercantile community which has identified itself with the British Government, have absolutely no intention to give us self-government or to let us proceed towards self-government. Their interests are identical. It is a purely profiteering and dominating community, both the officials and the non-officials, and we expect no mercy from them. I say nothing against individuals. It is a machine, it is a soulless machine, it is a cruel machine which only knows how to grind and how to destroy. Don't we know, Sir, that this machine has reduced us to a condition of paupers ? What are we? After 155 years or 175 years of British rule in this country, what is our position in our country ? (An Honourable Member ; "What were you before?) It is said, Sir, that we are unfit to defend ourselves, we are unfit to defend our homes, we are unfit to defend our hearths ; we are unfit even to manage our Railways. Not only are we unfit to manage the Railways, but we are unfit to manage even our finances. Is there anything we are fit to manage except to be the tools of the British Government for the aggrandisement of Great Britain ? We are only fit to pay taxes. we are only fit to be used as tools, but we are unfit to do anything else which any self-respecting nation can be expected to do. That is the product of their machine, Government in India, and if they are proud of it, let them be. I do not object to it. I think they are human beings. They have come here to make money, to fill their pockets (Laughter) and they are using every possible means to fill their pockets. Well, let them not pose as trustees. That is what I object to. If they are trustees, they are trustees of that kind which swallow every penny of the trust money. (Laughter). Are they really trustees ? I do not believe they are.. Some time ago a gentleman who now occupies the position of a Cabinet Minister, Sir William Joynson-Hicks[18], said in one of his speeches, "We conquered India by the sword and we propose to maintain it by the sword." Sir, the other day when these Reforms were on the anvil in 1918, one of the greatest representatives of the Anglo-Indians, Sir George Chesney, in his book on "India under Experiment"[19] practically said that India gave them

their bread and butter; they could not allow it to go out of their hands. That, Sir, is the truth. Let them not pose as humanitarians, let them not pose as trustees; let them behave as ordinary human beings and, keeping their interests at the back of their minds, let them try to get as much out of us as possible. That is their point of view, I know. I know we are helpless. Lord Birkenhead wants to remind us about the realities of the situation. Don't we know them? Don't we know that we are impotent? Don't we know that we are powerless? Don't we know that this Government has completely emasculated us? Not only emasculated us, but has also introduced that poison into our system by which our own countrymen are against us and support the Government as it is. (Cries of shame, shame.) Don't we know all that? It is the system to which I take objection. I submit, Sir, the whole history of the working of the Reforms has shown us that they, the British statesmen, did not mean what they said in 1917. Do they mean to give us some modicum of self-government? No, they do not mean it. They have been crushing us, they have been trampling all our decisions under foot, they have been treating us as criminals, as ordinary criminals, they have been keeping us under police surveillance; they have been opening our letters, shadowing us in the railway trains. And still they want us to believe that the British Government in this country really means to give us self-government. Sir, I do not believe in these hollow declarations. They are absolutely hollow and insincere. I do not believe them, and that is my one reason why I cannot believe in the *bona fides* of the present action of the Government in appointing a purely British Commission.

Sir, I do not want to go on very long, but I want to make just one appeal to my friends here, to Indian Members in this House. Friends, when you are voting.........

Mr. President: Will the Honourable Member address the Chair?

Lala Lajpat Rai: I beg your pardon, Sir. Well, Sir, I appeal to the Chair to help us, to let our Members realise that they are in the eyes of the British Government and in the eyes of the world at large mere helots. Let them remember, when they go to vote on this Resolution, that sixty millions of our countrymen died in one epidemic of influenza in 1918[20]. Let them remember that 100 millions of our poor countrymen do not get two meals a day. Let them

remember that there is no place of honour for us in the constitution of this Government unless we agree to surrender abjectly to all their demands and to play to their tune in their Councils, whether they be executive or legislative. Let them remember all that, Sir. We are under no delusions ; we know that we are helpless ; we know that we are surrounded by high waves ; we know that our frail bark is every moment in danger of being overturned and swallowed up by the high seas. We know that we are sitting on the crest of a volcano and an eruption at any moment may swallow us in tongues of fire. We know that we are hanging in mid-air and that our own countrymen are deluded by the promises of this hypocritical Government. We know all that. We know that we are hanging over a precipice and any moment an avalanche might overtake us and bury us. We know all that. But knowing all that, we refuse to accept the crumbs they want to throw to us. We are not dogs. We shall not accept the crumbs. We shall stick to our attitude and go down with honour and self-respect. Some of us know that individually they can add to their comforts and convenience if they go with Government into the same lobby. We know that very well. But we are not going to do it. I hope, Sir, the Indian Members of this Assembly will remember that they have great responsibility towards their own people, towards those babies who are dying in millions every day for want of nourishing milk because they are being ground down by the hard and cruel machinery, the political and economic machinery, which is in operation in this country. Why, every Government on the face of the earth is doing all that lies in its power to improve the health and vitality of its people, but this Government will not do it, because the money they take from us is required for their own purposes and the purposes of these gentlemen, the Anglo-Indian mercantile community. These latter profess to be our greatest friends ; we are told they have supplied us with railways............

Mr. President : I must ask the Honourable Member to conclude his remarks.

Lala Lajpat Rai : I will not take more than a minute. I only want to say one word to my Muslim friends. I would say to them, "Remember the Partition of Bengal. Remember the Treaty of Sevres." No amount of promises by this Government will ever help you. Islam does not teach you to be slaves and to cringe. I would say to them : "Play the game ; be men and join in the struggle." This

struggle will not end with this Commission. It is going to continue. I know that our work is very arduous, but I can assure you that whatever may happen we shall bear our sufferings cheerfully. We shall not appeal to the Britishers for mercy. We do not ask for pity. At the same time we shall do everything that lies in our power to impress upon the English nation that we are in earnest, in dead earnest to be the master of our own home and shall not accept any crumbs which they may offer to us for the satisfaction of our appetite.

Sir, I move.

REPLY TO THE DEBATE

Sir, I want to make it clear at the outset of my reply that my Resolution does not involve any general scheme of non-co-operation. All the discussion directed against it on that ground is absolutely beside the point. I quite understand the view which the Chair took that it simply confines itself to non-co-operating with the Commission as it is constituted today, and nothing else and nothing further. I do believe in the principles of non-co-operation ; I have always believed in them. But unfortunately I also believe that we cannot carry it to its logical consequences ; and therefore at the present moment I am not asking for any general scheme of non-co-operation. We on this side of the House are all agreed that the Commission as at present constituted is unacceptable to us and we shall have nothing to do with it. There we stand, nothing more and nothing less for the present. Secondly, Sir, I want to make clear what I said about the coming in of the United States into the war. I never said that the United States entered into the war after the announcement was made. I gave the genesis of the entry of the United States into the war and I am very glad that I am supported in the statement by a very high authority which I will just quote before you. My point was this, which I remind the Honourable the Home Member to remember, that in 1916 the war was going against the Allies ; the Allies were very anxious to bring in the United States of America and the United States of America would not come into the war unless they were assured of the aims and objects of the war and unless they were sure of the attitude of the British Government towards India. Sir, on this, the scheme of announcement about India was settled in 1916, though announced in August 1917. What I maintain is this, and I quote one of the highest authorities in support of my proposition. Lord Chelmsford, Sir, in speaking from

his place in the House of Lords on the 24th November, 1927 made the following statement :

"I came home from India in January, 1916, for six weeks before I went out again as Viceroy, and when I got home I found that there was a Committee in existence at the India Office, which was considering on what lines future constitutional development might take place. That Committee, before my return in the middle of March, gave me a pamphlet containing in broad outline the views which were held with regard to future constitutional development. When I reached India I showed this pamphlet to my Council and also to my noble friend Lord Meston, who was then Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces. It contained what is now known as the diarchic principle."

The scheme was practically settled in March 1916 though the announcement was made in August 1917. The United States entered into the war, as my Honourable friend said in April, 1917. So, the position that I held was not at all incorrect. Again in the same speech Lord Chelmsford said :

"It is true that Mr. Montagu was a mouthpiece of that announcement but it is common knowledge that the announcement in its substance had been framed before Mr. Montagu assumed office." I suppose that that should be complete answer to the Honourable the Home Member's reply to my statement.

Then, Sir, some statements have been quoted by the Honourable the Leader of the House and one of these statements which he quoted was the statement made by Colonel Wedgwood at the time when the non-co-operation campaign was going on in India. I think it will be better to read his latest statement in which he makes his position clear not only about the boycott of this Commission but also about the non-co-operation movement. This is what he said in the House of Commons on the 25th November, 1927 :

"There is one final word I should say. I have always opposed the non-co-operation of Indian politicians. Nothing could be more futile. Non-co-operation in the working of the machine for the control of Government in India injures nobody but the people who refuse to help in the working of it. But a refusal to petition foreigners for favours is a very different thing. What are the Indians losing if they do not give evidence before the Commission ? Are

they losing anything at all ? The actual information required by the Commission can be got voluminously from the numerous reports supplied by and to the Muddiman Commission[21]. They can have reports from every province in India. Consequently, information will not be lacking."

Whatever may be the value of Colonel Wedgwood's opinion as to non-co-operation, it is not fair to quote his former statement without bringing his latest statement to the notice of the House in which he contrasted his present opinion about the boycott with his past opinion about non-co-operation. The two things stand on quite a different footing.

Now, I want to make another point clear. Much has been said by Members on the other side that the British Parliament wants to insist on giving self-government to India. I never had any knowledge of any such insistence. After all what do we want ? We want only self-government and if the British Parliament wants to give it, we shall be only too willing to take it with great pleasure. In spite of all the diatribe that has been hurled on me by my friend Dr. Suhrawardy[22], what does he say ? He says : "We have had enough of these promises, we have had enough of these pledges, we have had enough of these declarations and we have had enough of this co-operation and they have all brought us to this conclusion that nothing that the British have promised has actually been carried out." Sir, that is a charge that we bring against the British and that is the main reason why we do not want to co-operate with this Commission. As I said, we do not believe in the *bona fides* of those who have appointed this Commission. I want to make it perfectly clear that I have absolutely nothing to say against the present Commission but what I do say is that they can do us no good in their present constitution because they have no such power. I repeat it once more that it is not in their power to grant us equality of status. They are restricted in their power and in their functions by the document which has appointed them and according to that document they have absolutely no power to give us an equality of status. All this talk about their giving us equality of status is, to my judgment, absolutely rubbish. There is no substance in it ; there is no logic in it ; they cannot go beyond the terms of the document by which they have been appointed. They can only act up to the

instructions which have been given to them in this matter. Therefore, all that talk is perfectly irrelevant.

Sir, I put to the Government one question : Do they not attach any significance to the fact that all those people who had been hitherto co-operating with the Government for all their lives are now united in boycotting this Commission ? Does the Government really understand the significance of this unity ? It is not the Congress people alone but all the Moderates and all those who have held high offices under Government and who were patriots and trusted members of the Government of India at one time or the other and who were then credited with the higher political sagacity—they are all at the present moment against co-operation with this Commission.

They say the only honourable course is to boycott. Has that no significance for the Government of India ? We are under no delusion that this Commission will not go on with its work. We do not expect any change, nor do we want any change. But we are under no delusion that the Commission will not go on with its work, with the co-operation of "millions of Muhammadans", "the millions of the depressed classes", and with "millions of Anglo-Indians". All we say is that we shall not willingly be a party to any document which does not give us equal status and equal rights. We do not say that they cannot carry on the work without us. That is not our point of view. We know our position. We are not holding out any threats, or indulging in any bluff. We think that our sense of self-respect does not allow us to co-operate with the Commission on the terms on which they want us to co-operate.

Mr. Chatterjee[23] has been very eloquent. He says he approached a leader, probably alluding to me, and that I could not satisfy him. I cannot give out the substance of the talk he had with me, because it is against the etiquette of the House to refer to private conversation—I think it was very unfair of him to quote part of that conversation. Otherwise I could have shown to you the absolute rot that he has been talking.

Then I come to my friend, Sir Hari Singh Gour. I cannot

understand Sir Hari Singh Gour's point. He has explained it generally, and he has been telling you that he objects to my Resolution as it involves non-co-operation. The wording of his wire to me was, "I am in favour of boycott, if unanimously accepted by all parties". The ground which he now takes is different. He has changed his position. He is entitled to do that, but let him remember that that was not the original position which he took up.

Sir Hari Singh Gour : I rise to a point of order. My Honourable friend has perhaps forgotten that I never said anything of the kind.

Mr. President : Order, order. There is no point of order.

Sir Hari Singh Gour : It is a personal explanation.

Lala Lajpat Rai : I shall be very happy to send him a copy of that telegram, because I still possess it.

Now I do not want to prolong the debate. I want to say one or two words to my Muslim friends. Mr. Shah Nawaz has been talking to me about the Hindu-Muslim question, and the same thing has been said by Dr. Suhrawardy. They have been harping on the question of separate electorates. Let them take it from me that we on this side of the House have absolutely no intention of thrusting joint electorates on them unless we can carry with us the bulk of Muhammadan Nationalists. We have no intention of going down on our knees to them. One of them, Dr. Suhrawardy says, he does not believe in the good faith of England, perfidious Albion was how he referred to her, but he has less faith in the Hindus. I appeal to him as a true Muhammadan, to have faith in nobody. Let him stand by himself on his own legs without having any faith either in Hindus or Englishmen. Why should he have any faith in anybody ? His Prophet says, "Have faith in nobody but Allah." If he has no faith in Hindus and he thinks he will be better treated by Englishmen, he is entirely mistaken. The English will not live in this country for ever. It is we and they who are going to live for ever here. He has no faith in Hindus today, but he will have to cultivate that faith some time or other. We have ample faith in them and, God willing, we will one day prove our faith in them.

A taunt was made about our failure to make a constitution. It is very easy to say that. No constitution made by any party can be unanimously agreed to. There are different interests, and there

are interests put up, which will never allow unanimous agreement. So long as there is a third party it is almost impossible to draft a unanimous constitution ; and that is the reason why we have not attempted it so far ; but God willing we shall show them a united constitution ; let them not harp on this that we have not been able to show them a constitution. The time has not yet come ; we have just started on it ; constitutions were not made in a day or in a few days' time ; no country in the world was able to do so. Look at the time the constitution-making in the United States took ; look at the time the constitution-making has taken in England itself : look at the time constitution-making has taken in South Africa. It is no use taunting us that we have not been able to put up a constitution so far. I can quite understand why Lord Birkenhead repeats this parrot cry ; they have enough influence in the country and can put agencies in motion which will not allow us to make a constitution and that is the reason why he makes that offer so often. We understand the value of it. There is not the least significance in it and we do not believe that it is a *bona fide* offer at all. With all that, we are trying our very best ; Nationalists, Hindu and Muslim alike, will soon, God willing, come to agreement upon the main points of this constitution and we shall draft a constitution.

Sir, I do not want to detain this House further ; I just want to say one or two things more. Some Honourable Member spoke of the tyranny of public opinion, in reference to the position of my Honourable friend Mr. Jayakar. But, Sir, tyranny of public opinion is much inferior to the tyranny of Governments. Governments have got plenty of money in the treasury and they have plenty of offices in their gift ; their tyranny is much more potent and much more influential and much more effective than the tyranny of public opinion, which is at best impotent. You talk of tyranny of public opinion, why do you not stand aside and give us a fair chance. The easiest way to find out what is the opinion of the Indian community with regard to this Commission is to let the officials stand aside, and allow us to settle the question among ourselves. Let us see what is the vote of all non-officials—nominated and elected alike. Let us see what they stand for. But with these twenty-six machines drawing heavy salaries from that great battery of Indian finances in their hands, using all our money for their purposes, for them to ask us to bring about a united India, I submit, is not fair. That is not

how Englishmen, befor coming east of Suez, behave in their country. It is absolutely hitting below the belt. I again make this offer that on any proposition on which the Opposition and the Government differ, let the officials stand aside and see what the non-official community declares and let them take that as the opinion of the country. (An Honourable Member : "Let us take a plebiscite in the country.") (Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta : "We are prepared.") It has been said, "Oh, we never intended any insult." Yes, perhaps ; no mere insult or affront was intended ; we say your action in question is not an insult—it is an outrage ; it is an outrage on all sense of justice. There is no question of insult ; insult is a very weak term ; it does not cover all that we feel ; we feel that your action in entirely ignoring us, in setting us aside although the matter affects us most, is not a mere insult, but something much more than an insult.

Then, Sir, there was a talk of democracy. I really cannot contain myself when those gentlemen on the opposite benches should talk of democracy. Is not this Government the very negation of democracy ? Are we not seeing every day and from day to day how they overrule the elected Members of this House, the elected representatives of the people ? An autocracy, in the words of the author of the "Lost Dominion", talking of democracy is a farce which is worthy of the stage rather than the Assembly. Well, Sir, I would not say anything further.

A reference was made to Miss Mayo's book[21]. I do not want to refer to it : I leave that dirty book—that dirty thing—aside. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald has been quoted so often to the effect that all the English parties have combined together. Yes. We know all the robbers have combined. In our eyes they are all robbers. What do they expect us to do ? Suppose a dacoit comes and wants to take my things at the bayonet. Am I to say to him, "Yes ; I will co-operate with you in taking away my property?" We are not going to do it ; we have done it long enough for the past 150 years and that is my reply to Mr. Chatterjee. He says, "Why not give a trial ?", as if we have not given them a trial for all these years—for the past fifteen years. There is no question of trial at all. There is a limit to all patience and trial, and I say we have reached that limit. It now behoves us like men to take a united stand, all parties combining together. And I declare, Sir, on the floor of this House to all

the Indian Members of this House, that every vote against my proposition is a vote for the continuance of bondage, and every vote in favour of my proposition is a vote for freedom. The choice lies between Swaraj and bondage, and therefore I ask every Indian Member to vote for my proposition.

35. INTRODUCTION OF REFORMS IN THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE

I WANT TO extend my sympathy to Sir Denys Bray. In the difficult position in which he finds himself whenever the question of the introduction of reforms in the North-West Frontier Province comes up before this House. I feel real genuine sympathy for him ; and the way in which he performs his duty does credit to his training as a Political and Foreign Secretary because every time he evades the real issue, surrounds his replies with so many ifs and buts and irrelevant questions that in the end we are no wiser than when he had begun.

Sir, my Honourable friend has challenged me. I accept that challenge and I am prepared to say on the floor of this House that I personally am not opposed to the introduction of reforms in the North-West Frontier Province. The Hindu-Muslim position has greatly improved since the last debate took place[1] on account mostly of the advent of the Simon Commission. That is my first reply to the Honourable the Home Member for the taunt he addressed to us yesterday about our failure to arrive at any decision on the Hindu-Muslim differences in the All-Parties Conference[2]. I go a step further and say that I do not think my friend Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan[3] should have based his claims for reforms in the Frontier Province either on the ground of the capacity of the people, or as a reward for the services rendered by the people of the Frontier Province in the War. I think he should have based his claim on the natural right of the people to govern themselves.

Speech by Lajpat Rai in the Central Legislative Assembly delivered on 14 March 1928 when speaking on the Cut Motion moved by Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Khan regarding the introduction of reforms in the North-West Frontier Province during the General Budget Debate, 1928.

Well, Sir, I think the Government have played with this matter for too long. My anxiety on this question was displayed the other day when I said that in one way or the other the Government should decide this question at once, because its continuance in its present fluid condition causes more and more bitterness between Muhammadans, and Hindus. I also made that representation to the highest authorities in India before the advent of the Simon Commission. I said that the question should be decided one way or the other as soon as possible. I am aware that the question is a very serious one. It involves grave issues of internal and external moment, and the prosperity of the people of India as a whole ; but there ought to be a limit to the consideration of these questions. Surely Government can arrive at some decision. Why should the Government constantly tell us that the matter is under consideration? If Government were honest enough they should have said, "No, we are not at present prepared to give reforms to the North-West Frontier Province." That is their real attitude which they took up in the last debate. There is no use of saying that the matter is under consideration. Is it going to be under consideration for an illimitable time ? (An Honourable Member : "Till the end of the century"). While you yourself are not prepared to give reforms, you very cleverly and very diplomatically lay the blame on the Hindu community. That is the point which I wish to advance before this House, and I also wish to add that the Hindus of the North-West Frontier Province should make it clear that they are not going to oppose these reforms, because the present administration does not benefit them in the least. My friend has been singing the praises of the North-West Frontier Province Government. When did the Government of India care for the opinion of the Hindus ? At the time when my friend carried on an enquiry into the affairs of the North-West Frontier[4], the Hindus wanted five settled districts of that Province to be amalgamated with the Punjab. The Muhammadans would have supported that, because they would have come under the reformed Government, but the Government did not want the amalgamation, therefore the Government won over the opinions and votes of the Muhammadans by a kind of promise that they should have a Council in that Province.

Sir Denys Bray : No.

Lala Lajpat Rai : That was a trick played on them, otherwise

the Muhammadan community would have certainly voted for the re-amalgamation. My friend, Sir Abdul Qaiyum[5] supports me in that proposition, that they would rather come under the reformed administration of the Punjab than remain in a province without reforms.

Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum : I was the first witness before the Bray Committee and I said towards the end of my statement that if we could not be given full-fledged reforms, we should like re-amalgamation with the Punjab.

Lala Lajpat Rai : I am very glad that Sir Abdul Qaiyum has made the point clear. What happened ? The matter came for decision before the Government, and the Government accepted that part which suited their policy, that is, the non-amalgamation of the five districts with the Punjab. The rest they left to be considered, and they have been considering and considering and considering the matter ever since. Every time the debate comes up the Government charges us with a conspiracy of silence, while we charge the Government with a conspiracy of manoeuvring. They want the Hindu and Muslim members of the House to fight for their pleasure and profit. They don't say definitely, "No" or "Yes". They leave the Government members to vote whichever way they like. Why cannot the Government say, "Yes" or "No" ? Why cannot they decide one way or the other ? Let them even say that they are not prepared to give reforms just now. But every time the answer is "The matter is under the consideration of Government. The issues are so grave." We all know that. The only conclusion that we can therefore come to is that the Government are at the present time on account of those issues not prepared to grant the reforms. Say that plainly and then the Muhammadans and the Hindus will know how to proceed further, and what to do. But you keep them both on the string. Once you try to get the Hindu flunkies to your side, and at another time the Muhammadan flunkies, and you keep them both fighting together like birds of prey. That is the position of the Government. My friend has asked the Mover to refer to members on this side for an answer to his motion, that is very clever of him. I may tell him that in the All-Parties Conference matters have advanced considerably. There was nobody there, as my friend Dr. Moonje[6] will tell you, who was opposed to the reforms being introduced in the North-West Frontier Province. The only question was whether

It was to be done immediately or after the province had been put on the same level with other provinces in the matter of its judicial and executive administration. That was the position. All these outstanding questions could be settled today if we were sure that Government would accept our decision. Our uncertainties, our quarrels are due to the uncertainty of Government accepting our decision Even now the Honourable the Foreign Secretary is very wise or very diplomatic or very clever in saying that the decisions arrived at will not be turned down lightly. Who is going to be sure of that word "lightly". Are we to decide that or you ? Will you give us an assurance that you will accept any decision which the All-India Muhammadan and Hindu associations arrive at, and carry it through ? Give us that promise, and we will settle that question in no time. That is my second reply to the Honourable the Home Member. We do not know what view the Government is going to take, and therefore the Muhammadans and Hindus continue to keep apart. But if we were left to ourselves, a decision would be arrived at in no time. We cannot decide all these pending questions finally, because we are not certain what view the Government would take of the matter. The position of the Government is regrettable.

I wish to say another thing, and that is that, so far as the administration of the Frontier Province is concerned, it is a rotten administration, rotten to the core. The Vernacular Press of both provinces say that it is a lawless province, and certainly there cannot be any other name for it. It is a province from which anybody can be turned out or prevented from entering it for no reason. The people are sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment without a judicial finding. It is certainly not entitled to be called a province in which the law is administered. If after 75 years of administration the North-West Frontier Province is not in a position today to administer the ordinary laws of the country, is not in a position to adopt judicial procedure in its dealings with its residents, I submit that administration is an administration that is entitled to be swept away.

I want to say one thing more to Sir Abdul Qaiyum. The responsibility rests mostly on him. As long as he continues his present attitude of siding with Government and saying things in praise of the administration of the North-West Frontier Province, he will never get any reforms in that province. The way to get reforms is to point

out the mistakes of the administration and to show that the administration is rotten, backward and lawless. Let him join hands with his Hindu countrymen and present a unanimous front to get the administration reformed and changed. I would ask my friend to come over to this side of the House and join hands with us, and then he will get reforms sooner instead of making out that he has got nothing to say against the administration. If he has nothing to say against the administration, then why harp on this string every time, and still go on voting in the Government lobby every time, even when we ask him to vote for the leadership of Indians at Geneva? That is not the way to get reforms. He is no doubt a very shrewd man and knows which side his bread is buttered. (Laughter). But I would beg of him on the floor of this House to give up that attitude, that subsidiary attitude, towards the Government, voting in season and out of season for them and supporting their administration. Sir, he does not say, he has not had the courage to say, but I say that the administration in the North-West Frontier Province is carried on no principles and should be changed, should be improved or swept away. He should use stronger language because he said just now that he knew the conditions and his people suffered therefrom. But when he continues to adopt that sort of *non possumus* attitude, that attitude of super-loyalty, he will never get anything out of the Government.

Now I want to say one word more. The other day, Sir, I proposed a cut to which objection was taken by my Honourable friend Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan. I have great respect for him, and even though he used a very discourteous term about me I never took any offence because I am sure he never meant any. I proposed that cut for two objects and I want to explain them. Firstly, I wanted to tell my Hindu countrymen in the North-West Frontier Province that the administration of the Province even at the present moment was practically a Muhammadan administration and that they would not suffer by any change. Take the lists of different departments in that Province. I have twelve such lists in my hand which show that Hindus have been completely eliminated from the officer ranks of these departments, including the Education Department. Even in the Education Department there is not a single Hindu Officer. No body can say that Hindus are not fit to serve in

the Education Department as inspecting officers, etc. It is a predominantly Muhammadan province, and we do not object to Muhammdans taking a larger share. That is not a point on which I wanted to raise the communal qnestions. When I raised that point I wanted to point out that the Government was doing practically nothing for the Hindus in that province and that the Hindu population had no ground to be grateful to them or my other object was to point out to my Muslim friends that there was another side also. Really speaking there is no security either of property or of person for the Hindus in that province. What happened at Kohat, Dehra Ismail Khan and other places is conclusive evidence if any was needed on that point. Judging from the reports which appear in the newspapers, almost every day, the condition of Hindus in the villages and in the smaller towns is such that they are being crushed into atoms by the absolutely irresponsible administration of that province and by irresponsible Muhammadans. They have therefore nothing to fear from an exclusively Muhammadan administration. I think a Muhammadan administration will under no circumstances be worse for them than the present British administration. The Hindus and Muhammadans of the North-West Frontier Province ought to take lessons from their past. They ought to join hands and make a united demand. They ought to sit down together at a table and draw up a scheme for the better government and administration of their province and put it before the public as a united demand. They will then have the sympathy of all India and they will carry it—it may not be in six months or a year but in a very short time. But as long as they continue their present attitude—Hindus showing gratitude to Government for their houses being looted or burnt down and Muhammadans going over to the Government and saying 'This Government is admirable"—I say you will get nothing. You have to point out the defects of the present system and demand improvement. That is my attitude towards this question, and I wish and hope that all Hindus will adopt the same attitude.

36. ECONOMIC DISTRESS IN INDIA—A WARNING TO GOVERNMENT

I RISE TO make a few observations on the Finance Bill with great reluctance, because the feeling that has been oppressing me for the last few days is, "What is the use"? An Honourable Member on the other side one day remarked that we were ploughing the sands. He was perfectly right. The Government has proved that all that we have been doing on this side of the House was nothing better than ploughing the sands. But I want to ask the other side, what they have been doing? The Members of the Government have been, I say—and I say it with a profound sense of responsibility—showing an attitude which can only result in disaster. I give them a timely warning, Sir, that the conditions in the country are becoming rather very very serious. It is no question of laughter. It is no question of cutting jokes on either side of the House. It is a very serious condition that is developing in the country, and I submit that Government are not doing enough to avert the disaster which will inevitably come if the condition of things continues developing in the way it is developing. Nineteen days ago the Honourable the Finance Member introduced his Budget and made his speech explaining the same; Sir, for two days less than nineteen days we have been discussing this Budget and the Finance Bill. We have heard many speeches on both sides, sometimes angry, sometimes conciliatory. Retorts and repartees have been freely exchanged. But the one thing which I would ask the Honourable Members on the Government side to answer is, "What have they done for the people of this country? What do they intend to do for the people of this country"? My Honourable friend the Home Member one day remarked that in connection with the Statutory

Speech delivered by Lajpat Rai in the Central Legislative Assembly on 19 March 1928 during the general debate on the Indian Finance Bill.

Commission issue there was a fourth party in India besides the Government, the Opposition and the Statutory Commission itself that was interested in its labours. That was the only remark which fell from the Government Benches about the people of this country. That was the only regard which they showed for the people of this country. I wish to ask the Honourable the Home Member, "Who represents the people of this country ? Does he represent them ?"...'

Lieut.-Colonel H.A.J. Gidney[1] : Do you ?

Lala Lajpat Rai : No; Colonel Gidney does. We do not represent them.

Lieut.-Colonel H.A.J. Gidney : Whom do you represent ?

Lala Lajpat Rai : We have come here by the elected votes of at least hundreds of thousands of people, we do not represent the people. Very well. I again ask the question "Who represent the people of India in this House" ? Does the Honourable the Home Member represent them ? If he does represent them, will he point out to me one sentence in all his speeches here in which he showed any concern for the people of this country ? Does the Honourable the Finance Member represent them ? I listened to his speeches with great attention. I have listened to Budget speeches in other Parliaments in other countries. This House of course is not a Parliament. But in other places where the Chancellor of the Exchequer every year gives an account of his stewardship, there is not one speech made in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer or other responsible Ministers of the Government do not talk of the economic condition of the masses of the country. They deal with every possible question which affects the masses, their food, their health, their housing, their employment. But during all these talks here in this House not one sentence was uttered either by the Honourable the Finance Member or by anybody else as to how the people of the country were faring, what was the progress made in improving their economic condition, what was the condition of their food, what was the condition of their clothing, what was the condition of their housing and how they were going to solve the problem of employment. One solitary remark was made by the Finance Member in which he said that the returns of railway revenue were a sign of the prosperity of the people of this country. That was all, Sir. I say the Railways may be

prosperous but the people might be starving. There is a strong consensus of opinion amongst all competent observers whether official or non-official—of course officials are of two classes, (1) those who have some honesty of purpose left in them and (2) those who just carry on the red tape work and support their Government—that the people of this country are awfully poor. A number of competent non-official observers, Indian and European, have left it on record that the vast bulk of the people of this country do not get sufficient food. The late Lord Sinha[2] put their number at 100 millions. Was there a word of sympathy uttered in this House, Sir, by any Minister of the Government or by any Member of the European Benches for these starving millions ? Not one word.

Lieut.-Colonel H.A.J. Gidney : Oh, yes.

Lala Lajpat Rai : Figures will tell you that the population of the country is increasing, the production of food-stuffs is increasing but the people starve. The production of food has increased, yet the quantity available for consumption per man has decreased. Just for the purpose of illustration I will refer to the statements of two gentlemen. One is that of Dr. Harold Mann, who was the Director of Agriculture in the Bombay Presidency and who recently retired from his office. When he was retiring from his office he gave an interview to the *Times of India*, in the course of which he said that the greatest problem for the bulk of the agriculturists of the Bombay Presidency was how to fill their empty bellies. He said, "You cannot improve the quality of agriculture, you cannot do anything in villages unless you fill the empty bellies of agriculturists first." In fact, that was the head line under which his interview was published. There is another evidence which has been very laboriously collected by one Mr. Lupton, an Englishman. in a book called "Happy India", in which he also proves that the bulk of the agriculturists in this country do not get sufficient food. It is very easy to make calculations. Take the total production of food, deduct the exports from it and divide the rest by the number of people in this country, and you will find that the quantity available for consumption to the people is growing less and less every day. From food you come to clothing. That is another test of the financial prosperity of the country, not the income of Railways, nor the armies, nor the navies. The easiest, the best and the most effective test of the financial prosperity of a country is to look at

the life of its people, how they are fed, how they are clothed, how they live and how much they are educated. These are the four fundamental tests by which you can judge the prosperity of a country. That is the rock bottom test of the moral and material progress of a nation. The Honourable Members on the other side leave that task to be done by the skilful pen of Mr. Coatman,[3] or still better, by the skilful pen of Miss Mayo. They do no think it their duty to refer to these things in this House. These are mere commonplaces for them. I have already said something about how the people of this country are fed. Now let us come to clothing. The schedule given in the Tariff Board's Report will tell you that the number of yards available to the people of this country for clothing is also steadily falling. Come to the housing problem. That never enters the brains of any Honourable Member on the other side. That is not their problem because they are not affected by it. But look at the millions of mud hovels, wretched thatched hovels, in which the people of this country live from one year's end to another year's end and drag on their miserable lives, in disease, dirt and distress. Yet the Government has never shown the slightest possible anxiety for providing them with decent, sanitary houses nor does the European group ever think of that. From these three things let me come to education. Has the Education Member told us anything which would encourage us or make us hopeful that the people of this country would ever become literate and, if so, when and how ? No one talked about it ; the Government does not care : there is no need to say anything about it. The matter is self-evident ! A word, Sir, about the proposal that I made the other day about sanctioning a crore of rupees for the education of the depressed classes[4] for whom so much political anxiety is being shown. We were lectured that day that education had been transferred to the Provincial Governments. But what does that mean ? Do the Government of India maintain that they have entirely discarded their responsibility for the education of the people of this country ? Well, Sir, we have not got a full-fledged federal system in this country, but even in countries where there is a federal system, where the States occupy an autonomous position, the federal Government never feels itself relieved of the responsibility of furthering the education of the people of the country as a whole. Look at the figures in the United States of America. Every

State in the United States spends 39 per cent. of its revenue on education ; every City Government spends the same amount ; and yet the Federal Government takes keen interest in furthering the cause of education in various ways. For a large number of years the Federal Government has been giving away more than a million dollars from Federal revenues in furtherance of the cause of vocational education. They have been doing so for years now. Have they ever pleaded that the States were autonomous, that the Devolution Rules prevented them from doing anything in the matter or that education in the States was no longer their concern or their duty ? You talk of the people ! Do not the depressed classes come within the definition of the word "people" ? What has the Government of India done for these depressed classes or for their education ? We have been told from time to time that my friend Mr. Rajah,[5] represents the depressed classes in this House. How many proposals of his for making grants for the education of the depressed classes have been sanctioned ? The Member for Education has not told us at all what the Government have done for the education of the people. Then, there is the question of unemployment. I may tell you that there is one thing by which we feel very much oppressed. When we come to the Assembly, every time thousands of young boys, who have spent the last pie of their parents' income and property on the education which they have received, come to us and ask us, "What shall we do ? How shall we live ?" In the words of Miss Mayo, they say, "Give us office, or give us death". Yes, that is literally true because this Government has not made them fit for anything else. The Government does not feel any responsibility for them. Unemployment is no concern of the Government of India. How can they feed hungry mouths ? How can they find employment for all ? Yet the greatest modern Government in the world, the Government of Great Britain, even now feels itself responsible for providing food and clothing and shelter to over a million people every day of the week. They have been doing it for years and years. But the Government of India does not feel itself at all responsible for providing employment to the people or to look after their food, clothing, or housing. In the United Kingdom there is a Ministry of Housing and they have built lakhs of houses there with Government help for the purpose of providing proper sanitary houses. What has the Government of India done to

remove unemployment or to provide good houses? Hundreds and thousands of boys come to us and they ask us to do something for them in the Assembly. We go back after three months and say, "We have made many speeches but we have not been able to do anything else for you". What can we do? We cannot do anything, we are absolutely helpless. My Honourable friend here mentioned, traders who have become absolutely bankrupt under the present financial policy, who have gone to the insolvency courts. There are millions of people who do not have two meals a day. Every *chittack* of their produce is taxed. There is not even a small particle of their food which is untaxed.

What reply are we to give these men every time we go back from the Assembly? All we can say is, "We cannot help you, we are helpless". I want to point out to the Government Benches that this helplessness, this resourcelessness, this lack of power on the part of the representatives of the people, is a great danger for them as well as for us. It is a live danger, Sir. The Honourable Members are sowing the seeds of Bolshevism. I am not particularly enamoured of Bolshevism, nor am I particularly afraid of it, but I tell you honestly with the best of motives, in all seriousness, and in all humility, that if you go on like this for a number of years, not even the height of the Himalayas can prevent the entry of Bolshevism into the plains of India. Nothing will prevent it. You are producing the very conditions, the very circumstances, the very atmosphere which breeds Bolshevism, and if it comes, as come it must, the responsibility will be entirely yours. We are giving warnings to you from time to time on the floor of this House. We are doing a very unpleasant duty. Sometimes we use invective, (An Honourable Member: "It is fully deserved."), but it is out of anger which comes out of despair. You on your side—what did you do during all these debates? I have been scanning the faces of the Honourable Members on the opposite Benches, their non-chalant air. They seem to be saying: "Do you want to throw out the Demands? We know what to do. We are secure in our power, we are absolutely safe in our posts and you cannot touch us". Almost two-thirds of the Budget is non-votable and the other one-third is votable. When we come and discuss and criticise the policy of the Government in the different departments and when we throw out certain itmes, the next day you come with a smiling face, practically mocking us, ridiculing

us and laughing at us, to say that all these cuts have been restored by the Governor-General in Council. We knew it beforehand. We were quite ready for it, not that we did not know it. But all the same, remember that all that you are doing is being debited to your account and that account is growing and some day you will have to repay it. It is a very serious situation and I respectfully beg of you to consider it. We have been talking of the Army. You have told us it is necessary for the defence of India—it is necessary certainly for the defence of the interests which my Honourable friend, Mr. Gavin-Jones, represents, absolutely necessary from the British point of view, but not from the point of view of the people of this country. What have our people to defend? Have they to defend their "empty bellies"? Have they to defend their nakedness? Have they to defend their illiteracy? Have they to defend their mud hovels? What have they to defend? What need they defend? A few vested interests in the country have property to be defended. But what of the generality of the people? Who is taking care of the interests of the bulk of the population who pay for the maintenance of this Army?

Sir, I want to warn the Government in all seriousness that the situation is developing rapidly and seriously. It was time that we did something to prevent this economic helplessness and the destitution which prevails in the country. You may deny any political progress to us. You may abolish this House but if you really care for the security of your Government do something in time to remove this economic helplessness.

The Honourable the Finance Member has been telling us on the floor of this House as well as outside this House that he and many of his friends have been trying to build parliamentary institutions in this country, but that we are determined to commit political suicide. Is there any Parliament in the world which is so situated as this Assembly? I know of one Legislature, that of the Phillipine Islands, in the constitution of which there is a provision that if supplies are refused the Governor-General can take supplies on the scale of the previous year. The Phillipine Islands cannot be compared with India. India is a very big country and its revenues come to a huge figure. Leaving aside the Phillipine Islands, will my Honourable friend point out to me one Parliament in the world worth the name, which is so absolutely helpless as we are here?

Why then talk of it as a Parliament. You can abolish it if you think it is mischievous, as my Honourable friend Sir Victor Sassoon said that we on these Benches had made the Government callous. The Government did not care for any criticism. They did not even take the trouble to reply to criticisms made in this House by the Honourable Sir Victor Sassoon. He distributed his boquets of satire rather evenly and impartially, but the fact remains that the Honourable Members of the Government of India are entirely impervious and indifferent to criticism of any kind. They scoff at us, they laugh at us and treat us with contempt. Perhaps they know that we deserve it because we are absolutely helpless. Sir, we may be perfectly unfit for the discharge of the duties for which we have come here. We may be anything which my friends may like to call us, but we are absolutely sincere in our love of our country and we maintain that no one on the opposite Benches can love this country better than we do. Who is going to teach us our duties ? Are they going to teach us by scoffing at us, by restoring all the cuts by one stroke of the pen ? Sir, give up this game. Abolish this House if you want and go back to your previous absolutism if you will. Even then you will not improve the situation unless you probe deeply into the economic problem which is the real problem of this country. It will not be solved by exchanges, it will not be solved by armies and navies, it will not be solved by the figures of trade in which these millionaires may be interested. It will be solved by doing something for the benefit of the people of this country, so as to enable them to get more food to eat, more cloth to wear, better houses to live in, to be better educated and to enjoy all those comforts which people in other countries enjoy. Sir, the Honourable the Home Member has been very kind to inform me that he has issued orders that I should not be under police surveillance any further. I am very thankful to him and I thank him on the floor of this House. But that does not affect me in the least. I have been a political suspect all my life and will not mind if I have to continue to be such till the end of my days. On no account, however, will I falter in the performance of my duty to my country fearlessly. Sir, the Members of the Government say they want to see constitutional progress in this conntry. Will anybody kindly tell me what is constitutional progress ? You give us a certain franchise. We say it is very little and ask you to give us more, to enfranchise a larger number of people. You say, "We shall not give them the franchise. They are

not fit for it". At the same time you go on taunting us that we represent nodody or only an infinitesimal fraction of the people of this country. Whose fault is it ? On one hand you blame us for neglecting parliamentary institutions and on the other you refuse stubbornly to do anything to make it a real living Parliament, representing the interests of the country. These debates will be forgotten in a day or two after the House is dissolved but the disease is there, the germ is there, the sore is open. That sore is widening every day. The country is getting more and more discontented and unhappy. The people are not interested in the least in the Simon Commission. The Commission is already showing its teeth. In Ferozepur members of the Statutory Commission applauded a loyal Sikh who had won a municipal election against an Akali. Is that the kind of impartiality they are going to show ? The members of the Statutory Commission are going about saying "What a wonderful reception". At Lahore thirty thousand men greeted the Commission with black flags but the Commission thought it was a wonderful reception they received. The same thing happened at Gujranwala, at Lyallpur, at Gurdaspur and at Amritsar. Yet the Commissioners are reported to have been very much gratified by the wonderful official receptions they were accorded at these places. If this is the capacity of observation of the Statutory Commissioners, I think India is perfectly justified in placing no confidence in them. Cannot they see that it is a stage-managed thing ? Cannot they see that most of those who come to receive them are flunkies who are anxious to get jobs or favours ? Still they go on saying, "Oh ! what a wonderful reception". Sir, this stage play is going to react very damagingly both on the Government and on us also.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett : What about the Punjab Council ?

Lala Lajpat Rai : Yes, I am glad that the Honourable Member has reminded me of that. I will tell him what is the situation in the Punjab Council. You have so cleverly manoeuvred things there that with 50 Muhammadans and 50 Hindus and Sikhs balanced together, the real power lies in the hands of the Government block. My friend Mr. Shah Nawaz[6] comes here and praises the Finance Member. What does he know of commerce, of trade figures and of the conditions of the people ? Has he ever taken part in any

debate here in which these matters were discussed ? All that he has done is to flatter the Government Members and to say that we are obstructionists. I tell him that it requires ability to be an obstructionist. It requires sense to be a successful obstructionist.

Mian Mahommad Shah Nawaz : Stop this fooling, Lala Lajpat Rai.

Lala Lajpat Rai : It is you, Sir, who are fooling the country. It is Shah Nawaz, led by his father-in-law, Sir Muhammad Shafi, who has fooled the whole of the Punjab. Whom does he represent here ?

Mian Mahommad Shah Nawaz : Whom do you represent ?

Lala Lajpat Rai : I represent nobody, if you please. You say you represent the country and the agriculturists and yet you come here and flatter the officials, without saying a word about the condition of the people. Is that true representation of the country ? We know we are ploughing the sands, as my Honourable friend said the other day, but our ploughing the sands may prove fruitful some day. At any rate it is harmless ; but the seeds which the Government is sowing are sure to bring forth a bitter harvest. You want to keep us in a state of perpetual bondage. If that satisfies you we are quite content. Sir, I beg to ask my learned friend who talked of the Puujab Council why did he not talk of the United Provinces Council ? Why did the Honourable Member not talk of the Madras Council ? Why does the Honourable Member not refer to the Nagpur Council ? (Applause.) And talking of Councils, why did the Statutory Commission want this House to appoint a Committee ? Why not ignore this House ? Why come before this House and ask us to give you so much money for its expenses ? Why not go with your demand to the Punjab Council and let the Punjab Council give you the money to defray the expenses of the Statutory Commission ? You may be proud of the Punjab Council, and I am also proud of it in a way because that is the one place where you can find any shelter. (Laughter and Applause.) But I say the hen will come home to roost some day. You say that the Akalis with black flags are seditionists. Of course they are seditionists. Have you left them any chance to be anything else ? They do not count. There are Khilafatists and Congressmen, they do not count for anything. It is only men of the stamp of my friend Mr. Shah Nawaz who count. We do not count at all.

(At this stage several Honourable Members applauded and cheered, and Mr. Shah Nawaz who interrupted was inaudible.)

Mian Mahommad Shah Nawaz : Do not tell untruths.

Lala Lajpat Rai : They are not untruths. These facts are every day reported by the Government subsidised agency of the Associated Press.

Mr. K.C. Roy (Bengal Nominated Non-Official) : Sir, I repudiate that charge.

Lala Lajpat Rai : What charge ?

Mr. K.C. Roy : That it is subsidised. We do not get a single rupee by way of a subsidy.

Mr. J. Coatman (Director of Public Information) : Perhaps the Honourable Member will give some proof. He makes the assertion ; let him prove it.

Lala Lajpat Rai : Prove what ?

Mr. J. Coatman : That the Associated Press is subsidised.

Lala Lajpat Rai : I stick to the statement that the Associated Press is a subsidied agency.

Mr, J. Coatman : Give your proof.

Lala Lajpat Rai : The Associated Press would not be where it is but for the patronage of Government, and that is a form of subsidy. My Honourable friend should go and look up the word "subsidy" in a dictionary.

Mr. J. Coatman : You go and learn the word "proof".

Lala Lajpot Rai : I never used the word proof. Subsidies are given in many ways. There is not one kind of subsidy.

Mr. K.C. Roy : I shall ask Lala Lajpat Rai to move a motion for a Committee on the subject and I shall place every fact before every Member of the House and ask them for a judgment. (Cheers.) I shall never be a party to any subsidised agency.

Lala Lajpat Rai : There is no question of your being a party, Mr. K.C. Roy. You need not get angry.

Mr. President : Will the Honourable Member address the Chair.

Lala Lajpat Rai : Sir, I was saying there were various ways of subsidising. I do not know why Mr. Roy has become so very angry. We have been calling it a subsidised agency again and again. Tomorrow perhaps the Public Information Bureau will say that it is not a Government Department. There are ways and ways of giving subsidies. As for my friend's suggestion of making a motion—when can we carry a motion in this House, and who cares for it even if it is carried ?

Mr. K.C. Roy : I shall care for it.

Lala Lajpat Rai : The usefulness of it depends on many things, the members whom Government appoints to the Committee, and altogether there are too many "ifs" and buts". Really there is no use in doing anything through this House.

Before I sit down, Sir, I wish once more to warn the Government Benches that the situation is becoming very very serious ; and in all honesty and in all humility I beg the Government to go into the matter of the economic distress of this country. The country will not be saved by the blue books issued by the Public Information Bureau ; it will not be saved by speeches in this House. If the Government wants to do anything for the people of this country, let it frankly and openly improve the economic condition of the people of this country.

37. THE UNSOLVED RIDDLE OF LIFE

I AM sick of life—both mentally and physically. I suppose the one leads to the other. I have no zest left in me, no go, no desire. Whenever any one asks me to do anything or whenever I think of doing something the invariable question that comes out from the depth of my mind is—"Oh! what is the good?" Is there any good in this world? Is it worth all the trouble one takes over it? Is it not all vanity? The fact is I have lost faith in everything—in myself, in God, in humanity, in life, in the world. Nothing seems to be real or tangible. Everything seems to be ephemeral and outcome of human vanity. All my life I have fought and struggled against the doctrine—I have thundered from hundreds of platform that the doctrine which says "this world is false, unreal, imaginary and a delirium", is false and immoral. In hundreds of articles written for the Press I have denounced the teaching of Neo-Vedanta

This note written in a mood of religious scepticism and despondency was sent by Lala Lajpat Rai to his friend Ghanshyam Das Birla with a letter dated. Poona, 12 July 1928. The letter read:

In one of my letters I wrote to you that I was planning to write a long letter to you. In another I wrote to you I was miserable. Well, here is the explanation. I was very reluctant to write to you. I thought I was committing a sin in passing this lava of pessimism into the ears of a journeyman full of hopes, aspiration and ambitions. Yet I don't know why I am choosing you of all the persons on earth to be my confidant. Perhaps it is a pure impulse. I cannot account for it. But here I am, right or wrong, you shall have to read it. You may think I have gone mad, but I assure you I am absolutely sane. Perhaps I never was saner than I am. You may say it is my nerves that have been shattered. It may be. I don't know. Anyway I am taking you into my confidence, in the belief that you will not give me away, that you will treat it as strictly confidential and that you will give it back to me whenever I want it back. Want you to preserve it.

Yours affectionately,
Lajpat Rai

which calls this world and the life in it a delirium and unreality. Yet today in the evening of my life I find myself confronted with the same view. It is a curious frame of mind, undefinable, inexpressible in language, yet as real as anything can be. I have reached a stage when all activities, public or private, all desires, all emotions, seem to be nothing but vanity, the offshoots of vanity, the developments of vanity. Life is real, life is earnest—seems to me to be nothing more than the cry of unconscious vanity. What is there in life which is real and which one should take in earnest.

Are the relations of life real and earnest? No ! Hence I have not seen the nearest, the dearest, the most intimate relatives of life broken into pieces, like a piece of dry, rotten wood. There was a time in life when one built a great deal on these relations. One thought life without them was impossible. One worked hard, laboured incessantly, did all kinds of things moral and sometimes immoral too, put up with all kinds of discomforts and inconveniences to keep up the relatives—to meet the wants, the wishes, the desires of those whom one loved. One earned money for them, spent it on them, saved it for them and did all sorts of things to be useful to them, to please them. But then the times changed. All the relatives went on the dung-hill. They went astray. They changed and I also changed. Now they mean nothing to me and I nothing to them. Why ? The question has no answer.

If it is true of the nearest and dearest relationships of the world—connections by blood and marriage, is it not equally true of the friendships of the world. Where are the friendships of my childhood, of my youth, of my middle age ? Where are the friends for whom I contracted the deepest affection, who, I thought, were real, disinterested friends and loved me for my own sake—whom I considered it my duty to serve and sacrifice for—for whom I undertook gravest risks and for whose sake I allowed myself to be misunderstood and misrepresented ? Where are they ? Cast to the winds. I do not care for them and they do not care for me. Some of them are dead but others are alive. I never hear from them, never care to hear from them and vice-versa. Was there any real foundation for the friendships—were they based on selfishness or were they based on vanity? It is difficult to answer. Take the case of colleagues in public life. Is not what is said about relatives and friends above, equally true of them too ?

There was a time when I believed in God, in a God who heard prayers, rewarded us for our good deeds and punished us for bad ones. Slowly, gradually but most assuredly, that beliefl is gone. How can I believe in a God who is said to be just and benevolent, almighty and omniscient, who rules over this absurd world ? Can this world be the handiwork of a beneficent force—of a just, merciful and benevolent force ? Can this world, full of injustices, inequalities, cruelties and barbarities, be the handiwork of a good God. While hundreds and thousands of wicked people, people without brains, without a head or heart, immoral and cruel people, tyrants, oppressors, exploiters and selfish people are living in luxury and in any possible way insulting, trampling under foot, grinding into dust and also mocking their victims, these latter are living lives of untold misery, degradation, disgrace and of sheer want. They do not get even the necessities of life. Why all this inequalities? Can this be the handiwork of a just and true God? I know the reply which all theologians and believers give. I have myself indulged in those platitudes thousands of times. But the truth is that there is no satisfactory reply to that question. In the light of science one cannot honestly believe in a Creator or in a Maker, or in a personal God. Yes I can understand the reply of a Herbert Spencer. There must be an unknown and unknowable force behind all this manifestation of life which is the Primal Cause. But that is not a personal God who hears prayers and whom people call upon in their troubles and thank in their triumphs and successes. What is fate and what is God? Often when a person calls upon his God to hear his prayers or to do something for him I am inclined to shout "Stop this tomfoolery; where is thy God, I can find no trace of him in this absurd world." The world is great but it is absurd. It is magnificient but it is not moral, at least not moral in the sense in which we understand it. It is no place for justice or mercy or kindness or benevolence. It is wonderful but it is a mystery. It is open, yet it is a riddle which no one has been able to solve so far. You can't make head or tail of it. It is full of inconsistencies, incompatibilities, intangibilities, contradictions and what seem, to an honest observer, lies. What is truth and where is it ? Is there any truth in the religions, or in creeds, or in faiths? Are not those who say they have discovered truth labouring under a delirium or under a sense of vanity ? Did Mahatma Buddha, or Christ or Mohamed discover truths ? If so where are those

"truths." ? Why have these "truths" been distorted ? Why have they disunited mankind and divided them into factions, faiths and so on ? Does truth lead to disruption and disunion ? Is it not possible that all those good men were labouring under a sense of unconscious vanity and unthought of conceit ?

The short and long of it is that I have lost all faith in God or in religion. This world, this wretched world, this warring world, this absurd world, is certainly real in the sense that it exists before your eyes. You cannot deny its existence, nor its reality in this sense. But you cannot find its why, wherefore, whereto. All that is a mystery which it is not given to man to unfold however much he may try. All the explanations and solutions so far propounded are flat and stale. They do not satisfy my intellect. Yet all this scepticism, agnosticism or blasphemy, if you like to call it, does not lead me to a belief in Epicureanism.

What are the carnal pleasures of life—those of the senses ? Are they real ? Certainly not. They are as much unreal as anything else. Do they lead to happinesss or satisfaction? Certainly not. They contribute the greatest delusion of life. I do sometimes feel a hankering for the luxuries of life but when I have got them I feel that I have been guilty of a crime. My conscience begins to bite me. A belief in God and in future life is said to be the foundation of morality. I have not yet lost all faith in future life but future life of the soul in the shape of rewards for good deeds and punishment for bad deeds does not appeal to my intellect. There may be some kind of future life but a future life based on the theory of rewards and punishments is a grotesque idea. Once upon a time I believed in it. But now I think this theory of rewards for good deeds and punishments for bad deeds is very much responsible for the rotten condition of the Hindus. If being born an untouchable and a *chandala* is a punishment for past bad deeds what justification remains there for the untouchables to rebel against society. They have got what they deserved. The Sanatanists are perfectly logical. If the poor starving humanity of today is poor because it had done bad deeds in the previous birth, why they deserve all they suffer from and in suffering with patience and without complaints lies their salvation. That is a doctrine against which the whole of my soul, intellect and reason revolts. I cannot accept such a doctrine. Belief in God and in future life are their very poor foundations for morality.

Morality must stand or fall on its own merits. What are those merits ? This question is very perplexing. Is there anything like absolute morality? The standards of morality differ in different countries. Why then morality cannot be absolute? But I did not start to write a treatise on morality. My object was to explain why my doubts in the existence of God and in a future life do not lead me to a life of luxuries or to a life of immorality.

You may well ask me why then have I been in public life so often. The answer is "purely for selfish reasons"—to satisfy my hankering for action, or from a habit of mind. I have deeply felt the degradation of my country and the humiliation of my countrymen have sunk deep in my soul. They have made an impression which is ineffacable. They haunt me day and night. They have made my life miserable. From that misery I took refuge in action. People often complain that my writings and speeches are very bitter, very satirical and very biting. Yes they have to be so because they are the true expression of my inner self—my inner self is very sore, very bitter, very dour. The sense of impatience, humiliation and misery overwhelms me. I found relief in expression, in work, in action and even in taking risks. I don't seek risks but whole weight of my inner feeling leads me to it irresistibly. I am not a brave man by nature but the intensity of my feeling within has made me brave risks and dangers. Early in life I found that there was no happiness for me but there was some satisfaction in work and in action and in expression. So I acted on that impulse and on the dictum of the Upanishad, "*Kurmaneva Karmani*" etc., but the disappointments and disillusionments of public life, the demoralisation that prevails all round, the charlatanism and chicanery which are the order of the day in public men, have so disgusted and irritated me that whatever little pleasure and satisfaction I did get from public activities has gone. I am in a positively perplexing state of mind. I do not want to engage in public activities ; yet I cannot abstain from them. I hate making speeches ; yet I cannot altogether refuse and resist invitations though after every speech I ask myself, "Oh what was the good?" I hate public applause, I hate crowds, yet I cannot say I am indifferent to it. I am often lonely. I do not like loneliness yet I do not feel any the happier in company. I seek company yet after the company is gone I feel thankful for having got rid of it. Nothing satisfies me. I know the habit of too much analysis, of tearing

things into pieces is bad. It does not lead to pleasantness. Yet I often find myself in a hyper-critical mood. No one comes up to my ideals. I admire Gandhiji, I admire Malaviyaji, but I am often myself indulging in bitter criticism of them. Public life, public activities public engagements are no longer alluring ; they do not attract me ; they do not please me, yet I find I cannot live without them. Oh ! what am I to do—I am miserable, I am lonely, I am unhappy. yet I hug my miserableness, my loneliness and my unhappiness. I do want to get rid of this state of mind but I don't know how.

38. THE PUBLIC SAFETY (REMOVAL FROM INDIA) BILL

I RISE to oppose the motion made by the Honourable the Home Member that this Bill be taken into consideration. Before I proceed to give my reasons for my opinion or for my position, I want to dispose of a part of the speech made by my friend Sir Victor Sassoon. He talked of the immigration laws of the United States of America and South Africa and perhaps of Australia too. I wish there had been laws of that kind in India. I know something of the immigration laws of the United States. They have absolutely nothing to do with the principle of this Bill. They are entirely based on different considerations and on different principles and they

Speech delivered by Lajpat Rai in the Central Legislative Assembly on 12 September 1928 to oppose the consideration of the Public Safety (Removal from India) Bill, 1928. The Bill was introduced by the Home Member, Mr. J. Crerar. The objects and reasons as given by the Home Member were: 'Evidence has accumulated recently of the subversive intentions and activities of the Communist International generally and in particular of the efforts it is directing against India. The general policy of the communist movement is to rouse a spirit of discontent and lawlessness in the masses, whether industrial or agricultural, with the ultimate object of destroying by violence both the government established by law and the present economic organisation of the society and substituting what they describe as the dictatorship of the proletariat. For the promotion of this movement in India as in other countries the communists depend largely on the work of propagandists who are despatched to the country for the purpose of forming organisations intended to promote and spread communistic ideas and doctrines, and of creating general unrest among the masses. It is not reasonable that these agents of communism, if they happen to obtain entrance into India, should be allowed to stay in India with the object of undermining the whole structure of the life of the community. The Bill is designed to provide a power of removing such persons provided that they are not Indian British subjects or subjects of a State in India"

The amendment to refer the Bill to a Select Committee was moved by Sir Hari Singh Gour and was adopted.

were enacted long before Bolshevism came into existence at all. Therefore, I endorse Mr. Ranga Iyer's statement that a law of this kind would be thrown out by the Senate or the Congress of the United States, in fact by any civilised legislature. (Honourable Members : "No, no.") Wait a minute please. What is the principle of this Bill—not to stop the coming into India of the Bolshevik agents as my friend wants us to believe, but the principle of the Bill is to authorise the Executive Government of this country pass executive orders for the expulsion of certain people from this country. That is the principle of this Bill.

Sir Victor Sassoon : Is that not possible in America ?

Lala Lajpat Rai : That is not possible in America. On any complaint made to the immigration authorities, to the Department of Labour and Immigration in the United States, they at once issue a notice to the person or persons concerned to come and show cause. Not only do they allow the persons concerned to show cause, but they also allow them to be defended by lawyers. I know of a case from personal knowledge. Mr. Hardyal, one of the most distinguished Indians who visited America—of course you may not agree with his views—was once in the United States. He was served with a notice of this kind and he was allowed to appear before the immigration authorities and show cause why he should not be deported. He was defended by lawyers.[1] Then, furthermore, there is a provision in the law of the United States of America that the orders of the Labour Department and Immigration authorities can be questioned in a court of law, at least in the Supreme Court of Judicature in that country. They have not given the Executive the power to send anybody away without any notice, without any cause shown and without any defence being put in, such as this Bill seeks to give to the Executive here. If they wanted to expel all Communist agents that come into this country, the law should have been framed differently. I will come to that later on. Having disposed of that part of the speech of Sir Victor Sassoon, I will point out that there are no laws of this kind in any civilised country. Nobody has shown yet that such a law exists in any country. It perhaps exists in Fascist Italy. If that is the model which the British Government is going to adopt, then, I am afraid, I cannot congratulate them.

Now I shall come to the actual measure before me. I oppose

it because I do not consider it to be an honest measure. When I say that, I do not mean the slightest possible reflection upon the honesty of any individual member of the Government, but I do charge the Government of India as a whole with dishonesty of purpose in sanctioning the introduction of the Bill in the way they have done. No justification whatever has been made out for the introduction of this measure. I heard very carefully the speech of the Honourable the Home Member. What was the material that he placed before this House as justification for his asking this House to legislate on such a matter in such haste. He quoted a pamphlet that was the subject of litigation in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh in 1924, in a prosecution against certain Bolshevik propagandists. He also quoted from the letter of M.N. Roy. He quoted from another document that was circulated in India. I agree with my friend Sir Victor Sassoon when he said that probably this letter was not written by M.N. Roy. The matter which is included in this letter has already been before the British public and also for that reason before the Indian public. It was included in a Blue Book or White Book, I do not remember which, that was issued at the time when the Russian trade agents were expelled from England on the ground of having violated the terms of the Treaty which that Government had entered into with the Government of Great Britain[2]. All these instructions which you find in the letter of M.N. Roy, published by the Associated Press of India are to be found in those publications. There is nothing new in the letter. I therefore deliberately charge the Government with having chosen their time to publish this letter with the object of creating an atmosphere for this legislation. It was stated by the Honourable the Home Member that the letter came into this country or at least was written in December last and my friend Mr. Ranga Iyer asked why the Associated Press of India and the *Statesman* were not prosecuted for disseminating seditious matter, as that letter does contain seditious matter. I can give him the reason for that. The reason for that is that the letter was probably made over to the Associated Press of India by the Government for the purpose of publication. It probably remained in the Government pigeon-holes for some time. The Government have not given us any indication as to how they came into possession of this letter. The Government, clever as it is in intercepting letters in the Post Office, probably intercepted it in the

Post Office and kept it in its pigeon-holes for eight months to be used at the opportune time for legislation of this kind. How can they then prosecute the Associated Press of India or the *Statesman* for a thing which they themselves asked them to do ? I submit, Sir, that was an act of dishonesty on the part of Government to have kept that letter for so long, not to have published it before, but only just a few days before this Bill was introduced in this House.

Now, Sir, what I want to submit to this House is that those publications are not covered by this Bill. This Bill will not touch them. This House is asked to enact a measure which will authorise the Government by executive order to expel Communists ; so that part of the case put by the Home Member, viz., relating to those documents, was perfectly irrelevant, and has absolutely nothing to do with the principle of this Bill. Then, Sir we come to the actual agents, the Communists that have come to this country. So far as we know and as we were informed in that book called "India" written by the Director of Publicity Bureau,[3] there were two persons suspected to have been sent by the Russian Government or by Communists for the purpose of propaganda in this country. One of them has been in one of the jails of His Majesty and has been taking his repose ever since he came into this country. If he has been carrying on any propaganda from the jail, of which I do not know, then I submit, the responsibility lies on the Government, and not on "Comrade" Allison[4] or anybody else. The other gentleman whose name has been taken is Mr. Spratt.[5] My friend, Mr. Ranga Iyer, wants to give him a certificate and to make us believe that he is an angel. My friends on that side, the capitalists, want us to believe that he is the very embodiment of a devil. I express no opinion, Sir, on either side. I do not know that gentleman ; but I think it is absolutely unreasonable, very absurd, to believe that a man of that kind, whatever may be his capacity, could be instrumental in bringing about all these strikes, all these "disturbances" upon which my friend, the Honourable the Home Member, and my friend, Sir Victor Sassoon, rely so much. Sir this is the only material which has been placed before this House in justification of this sweeping measure, giving power to the executive to summarily expel any person suspected of being a foreign Communist without any trial in any court of law. I submit this is absolutely insufficient material for us to accept as the basis for this legislation.

My friend, Sir Victor Sassoon, made a great deal of the maxim that prevention is better than cure. But does he not know that principle of jurisprudence that no penal law should be enacted unless there is actual necessity for it ?

Sir Victor Sassoon : But there is actual necessity for it.

Lala Lajpat Rai : I submit no material has been placed before this House to justify the enactment of such a measure. There are laws enough in this country under which anybody committing the acts which have been detailed in clause 2 can be punished or deported. There is Regulation III of 1818—and it was said on the floor of this House that that Regulation applies to everybody in India. Anybody who comes into India makes himself liable to the criminal laws of this country, be he a Communist or otherwise. If he comes here and commits any of these acts which are detailed in clause 2, I submit the Indian Penal Code is wide enough to punish him ; and therefore, there is no reason why the Indian tax-payer should be burdened with the cost of his expulsion from this country. I could have understood one thing, which the Government could have easily done and in which perhaps we might have supported them. That would have been this, that, if a person was convicted by a court of law of any such offence, he should be ordered to go out of this country instead of being fed at the cost of the Indian tax-payer in India. If the Government wanted authority of that kind, they could have proposed a measure for making a provision of that kind either in the Indian Penal Code or in the Criminal Procedure Code or even in Regulation III of 1818, and it would have been a very simple thing to have accepted it ; but Government have not done anything of that kind. They have proceeded to state in elaborate detail all kinds of beliefs and acts in clause 2 and to ask for executive authority for expelling men suspected of entertaining such beliefs or doing such acts. Sir, I will break no bones by stating to this House that this is not a measure really intended against foreign Communists only. It is only the thin end of the wedge. It is really directed against Indians themselves, Nationalists as well as Labourites. The foreign Communist will go away, will be turned out at the cost of the Indian tax-payer and will be taken to the British Isles or anywhere else, being comfortably berthed in a P. & O. steamer, but if this House accepts the principle of this Bill and accepts clause 2,

that acceptance could at any time be utilised for the purpose of prosecuting Nationalists and others who want Indian economic advance and political freedom. That is really the motive at the back of this legislation, which, I would ask my Honourable friends to consider, is not a measure intended against foreign Communists only. It is only the thin end of the wedge. What the Government are, aiming at, is to seek the approval of this House to prosecute and punish all those whom by hook or by crook they can bring within purview of that clause or who may be charged with acts mentioned in that clause. Well, Sir, look at this clause, how wide and sweeping it is. It is all very well for Sir Victor Sassoon to say that this can be changed in Select Committee. We want to know if it is not the case that that clause gives a fair indication of the mind of the Government as to what they want to do. Of course my friends may change the clause in the Select Committee, but we are at present discussing the form of the Bill as it is. Sir, let us look at clause 2. My friend, the Honourable the Home Member, made a distinction between Communist doctrines and Communist action. You will see in clause 2 that it is not Communist action that is proposed to be punished or dealt with. It is the advocacy directly or indirectly of the doctrine stated in that clause. The words are :

"Whoever directly or indirectly advocates the overthrow by force or violence the government established by law in British India."

That is an offence under the Indian Penal Code, and the Government is perfectly entitled to prosecute anybody, Indian or foreigner, for that offence in a court of justice and to take the verdict of that court, whether it be imprisonment or even death, but what is to prevent the Government from saying under cover of the phrase "directly or indirectly advocating the overthrow of the Government" that Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar and Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, who advocate complete independence, come under the category, although they do not really mean the overthrow of the British Government by force or violence. They may say, "We want a peaceful revolution", but the Government will say that they are not to be believed, because the only way for them to get complete political independence is by force or violence. That may be considered fair argument to use in regard to them. So the Government want the approval of this House to the proposition that all those who directly

or indirectly advocate the overthrow of the British Government by force or violence are guilty of Communism ; so that such a person, by being called a Communist although he may not be a Communist at all and may be only a political reformer or a socialist, may be brought under this clause. Then, Sir, let us go further. Under this clause to advocate "the abolition of all forms of law or organized government," is evidence of Communism. I do not know whether the Government of this country or the gentleman who drafted this Bill know that the Communists are not opposed to all forms of law or organised government, and that they have an organized government of their own, and that they only want all countries to adopt that form of government. Whether it is good or whether it is bad, it is an organized form of government, and it is such an organized form of government that even the mighty British empire wants to come to terms with that Government. They once recognized the necessity or the desirability of coming to terms with that Government by entering into a treaty of peace and trade with them. They have of course since dissolved that treaty by virtue of certain alleged breaches of that agreement or treaty which I need not state. Every civilized Government in the world today is anxious to enter into a treaty or pact of trade with that organized Government of the Soviet Union of Russia. Honourable Members may have recently read in the papers that the Soviet Government has recently signed the Kellogg Anti-War Pact.[6] The civilized Governments of the world have not treated the Communists as if they were "mad dogs" and outcastes. There are other Governments which are in no way better than the Communist Government of Russia.

An Honourable Member : Question ?

Lala Lajpat Rai : Of course you will question, because you are interested in questioning it. But as a fact they are in no way better. They are all desiring to push on their trade with Russia, to sell their manufactured articles, to get Soviet money, to enter into trade relations with that "damned" Russian Government which my friend thinks is so abominable. I may at once say that I am neither a Communist nor one having sympathy with the Communist doctrine. But at the same time I am not an Imperialist as well, and if the question arose of choosing between an Imperialist and a Communist Government, I do not know what I should choose, for both are equally bad and vicious and both are

equally destructive of the rights of others. Capitalism is only another name for Imperialism. It is capitalistic Imperialism upon which my friends fatten here in India by exploiting the masses of this country. To me it seems absolutely blasphemous for them to talk of the poor cultivators, the poor labourers, the poor peasants of this country. Are they not sucking the blood of these peasants? Have not their own authorities told them so in their documents? Dr. Harold Mann[7] has said that what the cultivator, the labourer and the peasant suffer from in India is an empty belly. Who is responsible for the empty belly? Those very same people who carry away millions of money out of the country which they have earned from those same peasants and with the help of Indian labour. And they do so with the help of this Government which has been compelled by those very capitalists to introduce this Bill. As my friend Mr. Ranga Iyer said, they are the people interested in keeping these Communists out and with investing this Government with executive powers to treat these people summarily. I am quite prepared to admit that Communism and Imperialism stand at two opposite poles. I have absolutely no doubt that the success of Communism in this world will mean the destruction of all empires. I am, therefore, satisfied that this effort on the part of this Government and on the part of my capitalist friends is perfectly natural. They want to suppress Communism. But why should they say that they are doing it in the interests of this country? Why import into this discussion matters which are not included in the Bill itself?

My friend the Honourable the Home Member and also Sir Hari Singh Gour waxed eloquent upon the protection of religion. My friend, whom, by the by, I congratulate on having got a seat amongst the gods, said he was not in love with bureaucracy. But evidently the bureaucracy has fallen in love with him—let us hope that it will last—and that explains his present attitude. The other day he was taunting some Members of this House with dishonesty in opposing his Bill for dissolution of Hindu marriages for fear of the voters and electors. I think my friend has made himself safe for all time to come for a permanent seat in this House and therefore he is no longer afraid of any voters or electors. That is why he is so anxious to uphold the principle of this Bill. I congratulate him. But, Sir, coming to the point, he talked of religion. Sir Hari Singh Gour talking of religion! That was quite a surprise to me, because

only a few months ago I read a document signed by that gentleman in which he framed the constitution of a League for modernizing India which asked all Indians to adopt all Western methods and do away with religion altogether. I know he will deny it, because he is accustomed to doing that.

Sir Hari Singh Gour : Can my friend produce that document?

Lala Lajpat Rai : Yes, I will, just as I produced a telegram which he sent to me in favour of the boycott of the Simon Commission and the sending of which he denied when I quoted it from memory. He has got into that habit and we on this side of House have ceased to take him seriously, both when he opposes or supports us. Therefore, it is a surprise to me to hear Sir Hari Singh Gour pleading for this Bill in the name of religion. I do not know what his religion is. There is a religion known as Mammon worship : there is a religion of God worship, which of course pious Hindus and Mussalmans follow. I do not believe that he follows any God worship. He follows Mammon worship. And then again, the British Government talking of the protection of religion in this country ! Why they have destroyed the very foundation of religion in this country by their very existence and by allowing forces to work in this country which are anti-religion. Religion has different meanings with different persons. Even Communists believe and allege that Bolshevism is a religion. If that is the meaning to be attached to religion, then perhaps my friend is perfectly religious and I am prepared to apologize for saying he has no religion. Religion has different forms—what form was meant when an appeal was made to the Hindus and Mussalmans of this House to rouse their passion on behalf of religion because the Communists attacked their religion. Well, Sir, if the Communists attack any religion, they attack the conventional Christian religion. They do not attack religion altogether, and as I have said, they do not attack every organized form of government.

Then, Sir, my Honourable friend the Home Member and my Honourable friend Sir Hari Singh Gour talked of Hindu culture and the structure of society. But, Sir, if there is any Hindu in this House who is putting the axe at the structure of Hindu society it is Sir Hari Singh Gour. I welcome his efforts to reform the Hindu religion and Hindu customs, but he should not talk of the structure of Hindu society. The structure of Hindu society which at present

exists he wants to do away with. He wants all Hindus to adopt the European hat. He wants all Hindus to eat with fork and knife and to adopt European manners. And then he talks of structure of Hindu society. It is very strange to me. I cannot understand it. But of course an advocate can use any argument that comes to him at the time of arguing a case.

Then, Sir, my Honourable friend the Home Member talked of restoration and reconstruction after the war. What is he going to restore in India ? Is he going to restore to us our pre-war poverty which has increased ten-fold since ? What is he going to reconstruct in India by means of this Bill ? Is he going to reconstruct Hindu society or Hindu religion ? I submit, the claim is absolutely preposterous and those claims do not find any mention in the Bill. I would have understood the honesty of the Government if they had simply said that this Bill is designed to kill Communism. In that case they should have defined what Communism means. They have not adopted that course for very good reasons, because if they had adopted that course they would have been forced to confine themselves to those particular things which are included in the term "Communism". This clause 2 is much more sweeping and much wider than what is meant by the expression "Communism". They would not have been able to condemn those who oppose organized government because the Communists are not anarchists. My friend Sir Hari Singh Gour also talked of that. He has evidently never read a book written by Bertrand Russell about the three forms of freedom, Syndicalism, Anarchism and Communism. It is Anarchism which attacks all forms of organized Government, not Communism. It would be profitable if my friends would first make themselves masters of that subject before making general statements on the floor of this House to the amazement of those of us who know something of the subject. This is not a honest measure. If it really aimed at expelling Bolsheviks and Communists only, it should have said so in the Bill itself. The Bolsheviks are not Anarchists. It has become the fashion for responsible people to make all kinds of wild statements against the Soviet Government of Russia. But Governments themselves do not want to take that line of attitude. Otherwise it will be impossible for them to enter into any agreement with the Soviet Government. Honourable Members here can talk in any way they like. The

Communists can call Imperialists mad just as my friend Sir Victor Sassoon has compared the Communists with mad dogs, they can charge the Imperialists with injecting poison into the system of the body politic. But no responsible Government, either the British or any other, would talk of that Government in that way, because they still hope to enter into trade contracts and trade agreements and trade treaties with them and make money out of them. Sir, this money business reminds me of the remark made by my friend Sir Hari Singh Gour of the money that was received from Moscow by my friend Mr. Joshi.[8] Well, Sir, he forgets that Great Britain gets money from Moscow, wants to get money from Moscow, and the only trouble is that Moscow will not give them enough money. There are men in the House of Commons sitting in the seats of the mighty that have received money from Moscow and they have not been turned out either from the House of Commons or from their country. Some of them will probably be adorning the Cabinet in the next Labour Government. I think my friend would be only too happy to get money from Moscow if he could. If a Bolshevik agent in this country were placed before a court of law for trial, my friend Sir Hari Singh Gour, would be the first man to ask for Rs. 2,000 a day for defending him and getting him acquitted. What has this absurd talk about money from Moscow to do with this Bill ? I may also remind him that his statement about strikes and "disturbances" is also entirely wide of the mark. It is his deplorable ignorance of the history of the world and of the history of the development of trade unions and trade unionism, of the Labour movement in the world, that is responsible for his saying that this particular phase which has been prominent in this year in this country marks the activities of the Communists or the Bolsheviks or is evidence of their activities in this country. In all times in the world, whenever there is any reform movement, whenever there is a preparation for framing a constitution, in pre-constitution days there have been such disturbances. What was the state of England in the days when the Reform Bill was on the anvil ? What were the conditions in other countries in the days when their constitutions were being changed or when trade unionism was being developed ? The history of trade unionism if cursorily studied even (that history has been written by Sydney Webb, who was a Member of the Labour Government)[9] would have shown him that what is happening in India is nothing,

absolutely nothing, as compared with what had happened in Great Britain or in other countries in Europe ; and that it is no indication that it is due to foreign influence or the influence of foreign Communists or foreign agents. The conclusion is entirely wrong. It is due, Sir, to the empty belly—hunger. My friend may not feel that it is due to hunger ; the Government Benches may not feel that it is due to hunger ; but we, who know those people, who work amongst them, live amongst them, we know that it is that abominable thing, hunger, which is at the bottom of this unrest and which creates these strikes. I have never made it a secret and have said so in this House and from the platform and in the Press, that indiscriminate strikes, not well grounded, should not be undertaken. I am not in favour of strikes; I am not in favour of strikes being started on small pretexts. My friend Mr. Joshi who knows much about these strikes can testify that I have spoken in Bombay, which is the home of organised labour, that they should not indulge in these strikes too often and too lightly. Hunger, however, makes that advice unacceptable. It is hunger which compels them to resort to these strikes. The textile strikes which my Honourable friend, Sir Victor Sassoon, referred to are at the bottom of this Bill ; it is to prevent these strikes, to isolate India altogether both in the political field and in the economic field, from the rest of the world, to make it entirely helpless that accounts for the introduction of this Bill. That is what this Bill is intended for. It is to frighten away people who want to investigate into labour conditions in this country, who want to investigate into political conditions in this country, from visiting this country ; it is to keep them away, so that they may keep away lest this law should be used against them and they may be turned out with ignominy.

Sir, this Bill, therefore, is not an honest measure ; it is a dishonest measure on the part of the Government ; it is an indirect attempt to get the verdict of this House to principles to which they would not agree if they were plainly and honestly put before them. Look at the wording of this Bill, "conducive to bring about that result", "is a member of any society or organisation" and so on. Look at the whole wording of the Bill. That will show that it is an attempt to get the verdict of this House, that all that is contained in clause 2 practically amounts to Communism or Bolshevism. The causes which my Honourable friend the Home Member stated was

the basis of this Bill are not stated in clause 2. Very few of them are stated there. This clause goes much further. It practically wants the approval of this House to all that is contained therein whether Communistic or not, so that if we once approve the principle of this Bill, of this clause, as it stands, and if the Government wants to prosecute and punish our own countrymen who want political independence or economic independence, they may say to this House, "You have accepted the principle of this Bill, you have accepted the principle embodied in clause 2. How can you object to prosecution and punishment of your people on the same basis and on the same grounds ?" Once the principles of this Bill are accepted, none of us here is safe, because in the opinion of the Benches opposite every one of us is a Bolshevik. Anybody who is not in favour of the present British Government of India, anybody who is not in favour of the present system of Government is a Bolshevik. I see Anglo-Indian papers ; I read them very often ; they call us Communists, Bolsheviks. In private talk too, people say "He is a Bolshevik". Practically what the Government wants is moral sanction for anything they might do hereafter in order to involve the Members of this House and those who are not inside this House but who advocate a better system of Government for their country in trouble. It is in order to prosecute and punish them that we are asked to pass this measure. I do not care if anybody is punished and prosecuted after fair trial, after a trial before a court of justice. But, Sir, I am very suspicious, extremely suspicious of the intentions of an executive Government when they want to be invested with judicial powers. It is a most dangerous thing. I would beg of the Members of this House not to invest the executive Government with judicial power in the way this Bill proposes to do. It gives power to the Government to judicially determine whether any person is guilty of acts stated in clause 2, and after judicial determination, *in camera* and in Executive Council they can expel anybody. This is a most dangerous power which any Legislature could give to an executive Government ; I also beg of the Members of this House not to think that they can improve this Bill in the Select Committee. The evil lies in the root of the Bill. The Bill practically is for the summary expulsion of people from this country and the Bill has to be radically changed. It will be impossible to change it in the Select Committee. Moreover, I submit, Sir, that

this Bill is not necessary. They have got all the powers they need and even more. Why should they multiply their powers from time to time? There is enough law already in their hands by which they can effect the purposes mentioned in this Bill. Sir, I want to appeal to the Members of this House to remember that this Government, perhaps any executive Government, but particularly this Government as it is constituted today, is not fit to be invested with these powers. Don't I know how these powers have been exercised from time to time in the interests of "law and order"? Don't I know that the Government have confined people without trial simply for administrative convenience? Was not that stated in the Bengal Legislative Council by a responsible Member of the Bengal Government? And don't I know, by personal experience, my own personal experience, that the exercise of such judicial powers by the executive Government is absolutely arbitrary, unwarranted, unjust and unfair? In the end they always say "Oh, we made a mistake". They made the mistake, but the poor man had to suffer all the time; his children had to suffer. They can make mistakes of this kind without qualm of conscience. I, therefore, beg to submit before this House, Sir, that first of all on general principle no executive Government is fit to be entrusted with this kind of power, but more particularly this Government is in no case fit for such a power. I do not want, Sir, to say anything unpleasant. This Government which has sanctioned, which has advocated, recommended, the constitution of a Commission composed entirely of Britishers, is not fit to be entrusted with any executive power of the kind specified in the Bill. I want to say from the floor of this House that this Government, although it contains three Indian gentlemen for whom I have some admiration, does not inspire any confidence in the country; therefore it is the last Government which ought to be invested with powers of this kind. Their whole outlook is Imperialistic, narrow, depressive and suppressive. Their outlook is not at all wide, judicial, or patriotic. Sir, all this talk about the Communist danger and the Bolshevist danger is entirely out of the question. Is there any chance of the people of this country listening to those men who talk in Russian or English? Can they understand them? The danger may be this, that the men educated among the Indian communities may become Communists. Go for these Indian Communists, punish them for their Communism and their Communistic views if you will say

frankly that your real object is to get at the Indian Communists. Why do you proceed in this understanding—telling us that you want to proceed against foreigners only ? You are practically bolstering up the law against Indians. It is a pretence, a disguise, intended to say that this Bill is not intended against us, that "it is against Britishers, foreigners." Why should we be saddled with cost of sending to his home a Britisher or a foreigner ? I happened to be once in Japan when the Japanese Government wanted to turn out two Indian revolutionaries. They did not give them passports or passages. They simply said, "Leave this country within such and such a date."[10] Let the Government get a conviction before a court of law and then take power by amending the Indian Penal Code so as to turn the men out of the country. It is no use giving them passages or protecting their property. If a court of law convicts the man of any of these offences, it is no business of ours to give him a comfortable cabin and provide him with a passage to his own home.

Sir, I object to the whole principle of this Bill. It is an absolutely vicious Bill, it is a Bill that has not been drawn up with any care for public opinion, with any care for fairness or for decency. I, therefore, wish to warn Members of this House not to be carried away by all this sentimental talk of danger. We are in no danger from Bolshevism or Communism. The greatest danger we are in, is from capitalists and exploiters. Don't we all know that money comes from Lancashire, from British trade unions, to help the strikes so that Indian mills may not operate ? It is not Moscow money alone that helps to foster strikes. Why blame the Bolshevists only ? They may be one of the forces that contribute towards strikes in this country but there are others also. I, therefore, wish to submit that nobody should be carried away by this sophistry He will be giving a dangerous weapon in the hands of Government to strangle all of us, to strangle our political aspirations if he accepts the principle of this Bill. This Bill is going to be applied to you now and hereafter by judicial and executive orders. Do not, therefore, be carried away by the idea that this Bill is intended for foreigners only. We wish all foreigners to leave this country and leave us free. We will always welcome them as friends, but not when they come here as exploiters. We are prepared to give them any amount of money they want if they will leave us free to fight out our own battles. You talk of

protecting Indian labourers. We don't want any of your protection. All we want is freedom to develop ourselves on our own lines, even to fight among ourselves if necessary. Give us that freedom and go away. We don't care for your protection. You have not come here to give us protection. You have come to make money, money, money. You have come to fill your pockets with our hard-earned money. All hard-earned money goes into the pockets of foreign capitalists and foreign exploiters. We understand all these tactics, we understand all these disguises and devices. You might carry the Bill by a majority, but I beg of the Indian Members of this House not to support the principle of this Bill and not even to accept the motion for Select Committee, because it is impossible to convert this Bill into any useful measure in the Select Committee, unless the Bill is entirely changed.

I, therefore, Sir, oppose the motion.

39. COMPLETE POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE VERSUS DOMINION STATUS

No self-respecting Indian could be so base as not to desire Complete Political Independence, for his country in the same sense in which the other countries of the world have it. But is there any country in the world which is really absolutely independent ? Every country has some limitations on its "complete independence." The free countries of the world are only "independent" in the sense that they are free to determine their policy and practice. No one can treat them as subordinates and no one can impose obligations on them, except such as are accepted by them of their own free will and in their own interest. This independence is all that can be expected and desired in this otherwise interdependent world.

I maintain that the self-governing Dominions of the British Commonwealth do enjoy this independence to the same extent as Great Britain herself does. The British Empire is a congeries of nations, free and not free. But the British Commonwealth of Nations, it is expected, will consist of free and self-governing nations. The British Empire is not a Commonwealth at present. The very word "Empire" signifies the existence of nations in it that are not free and self-governing. The vast bulk of the population included in the British Empire does not enjoy the rights of free citizenship. In it there are rulers and subjects. The Government of India which has under it the bulk of the population of the Empire is only a subordinate Government. Besides, it has under it a number of Indian States which are arbitrarily ruled and with which the Government of India also deals rather arbitrarily. It is, therefore, a travesty of language to call the British Empire, as it at present exists, a Commonwealth of Nations.

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Those who are in favour of adopting Complete Political Independence as their *immediate* goal do not believe in the sincerity of British declarations to confer Dominion Status on India. They believe (a) that these declarations are mere camouflage; (b) that whatever may be the status of other dominions, the British cannot afford to give the same status to India, because in the first place the population of India being so much larger than that of the British Isles plus the dominions, the former's partnership with the latter will practically mean the subordination of the white peoples of the Commonwealth to its coloured peoples, which is inconceivable; (c) that although the British people are prepared to make themselves responsible for the defence of the white dominions, they will not willingly do it in the case of India; (d) that the British people are not likely to concede even Dominion Status to India without bloodshed. In that case, why not go in for Complete Independence ? (e) that the genius and culture of India being so different from that of the British and their white dominions, India's development will always be hampered or cramped or overshadowed by that of the other parts of the Commonwealth.

This list is by no means exhaustive.

Every Indian must sympathise with this point of view. If India were free today to make her choice, she will not be disposed to join the British Commonwealth. But she is not free. She is included in the British Empire. The question before her then resolves itself into one of expediency—not hypocritcal expediency—but one of practical wisdom. Even Mr. Srinivas Iyengar says he would accept Dominion Status if it was granted at once. Some others hold that we should work for Dominion Status as a stepping stone to Complete Political Independence. I do not agree. I am of opinion that we should honestly, whole-heartedly and sincerely work for Dominion Status whether we get it immediately or in the next few years. I say so, because to me in our present circumstances, that seems to be the path of practical political wisdom. I am at one with my friends of Complete Political Independence school that the British are not likely to grant us Dominion Status at once, that they will not concede that status unless we have produced a sufficiently strong sanction behind us to *compel* them to do so. I am not even afraid of bloodshed. There is no use in being too much sentimental. My reasons for my opinion are :

(1) That Dominion Status, as at present understood, secures to us full independence and freedom to remain within the Commonwealth as long as it is in our interest to do so.

(2} That the partnership of the Commonwealth does not mean voting by population and that in case any dominion finds that it is out-voted by virtue of race prejudice or other similar considerations, it is free to dissolve the partnership.

(3) That the first task of the Indian Nationalists is to take the Indian States with them. No attempt in this direction has the ghost of a chance if you declare Complete Political Independence as your immediate goal. That a combination of the British Government and the Indian States against you will be a formidable obstacle in the way of your political progress.

(4) That the cry of Complete Political Independence leads people away from constructive political and social work and is a disturbing element in the nation-building departments of the country.

(5) That it gives the British an excuse for repression and suppression. I recognise that in the case of subject peoples repression and suppression is sometimes more beneficial to the political freedom than petty conciliations and superficial concessions. But even then in the present circumstances of India with our economic helplessness staring us in the face at every step, the balance of advantage lies in not giving the British an additional excuse for excessive repression and suppression.

(6) That any *practical active steps* towards Complete Political Independence cannot be taken except in secrecy and through revolutionary violence. The preachers of non-violence may talk as much as they like, but they will not advance an inch towards the goal unless they actively grapple with the problem of how and by what means ?

(7) That the dream of an Asiatic Federation is a mere fantasy, and we cannot build upon it.

Under the circumstances, may I ask my countrymen, not to waste their time and energy over this useless controversy. The present creed of the Congress is sufficiently comprehensive for all purposes and this diversion of attention in favour of the goal of Complete

Political Independence consumes so much time and energy which could be used to better advantage, that in my judgment it is neither wise nor expedient to indulge in it. Let us put our hands to the wheel and do practical work instead of wasting time in fruitless controversies and useless wordy polemics.

I am further of opinion that those who declare Complete Political Independence as their *immediate* goal cannot honourably remain members of Councils or the Assembly. The oath of allegiance is absolutely inconsistent with this position. A Jawaharlal may well talk of Complete Political Independence as his *immediate* goal but a Srinivas Iyengar cannot. I mean no offence to Mr. Iyengar.

40. PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS AT THE ETAWAH CONFERENCE

HAPPILY THE political atmosphere has now completely changed. After the wrangles of several years past, we have succeeded in coming to an agreement as regards the future Constitution of India. This agreement is embodied in the report of the Nehru Committee as modified in the resolutions and agreements of the All-Parties Conference held at Lucknow in the last week of August. The Working Committee of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha has accepted the recommendations of the report as modified in the Conference of Lucknow, by a resolution passed at its emergency meeting held at Simla on the 26th September, 1928, under the presidency of Dr. B.S. Moonje, the President of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha. This resolution is binding on all the subordinate organisations of the Mahasabha unless changed or modified or rescinded in a regular meeting of the All-India Hindu Sabha or in annual session of the Mahasabha. Happily Hindus all over India, except a few individuals in the Punjab, are satisfied with that resolution. Bhai Parmanand[1] is the most prominent of the opponents. It is very difficult to say definitely what he wants. He says that the report is disastrous to Hindus whereas all over India the Hindu feeling is completely in favour of the report. I have addressed crowded Hindu meetings in about eight or nine districts of the Punjab. I have consulted a large number of prominent Hindus everywhere in the Punjab and I can say that the overwhelming majority of Hindus in the Punjab are in favour of the report, and accept the position taken by the Working Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha. The remaining few take exception to the reservations allowed to minorities in some provinces

Excerpts from the Presidential address delivered by Lala Lajpat Rai at the Provincial Hindu Conference of Agra, held at Etawah (U.P.) on 27-28 October 1928.

and argue that that principle should have been extended to the Hindu minority in the Punjab also. While I can appreciate the first part of this contention, I regret, I can attach no weight to the second part of it. The principle of sanctioning exceptional treatment to some minorities as a tentative measure was accepted by the Maha-sabha in its manifesto issued in February last at Delhi. It was even accepted by the Punjab Provincial Sabha in its resolutions passed on 4th July, 1928. Under the circumstances, although the position, under which* reservation of seats for all minorities, Hindus or Muslims, outside the Punjab and Bengal has been allowed, is open to objection on principle, it is not so when it is considered that it is only for ten years and that also, as a compromise. After ten years all vestiges of communal representation must disappear from the Constitution of India. Personally I consider this arrangement to be satisfactory. So far, I have not read any expressions of dissatisfaction with it anywhere in the Hindu Press. With one or two exceptions the whole Hindu Press of the Punjab is in favour of the report and so is the Hindu Press of the rest of India. The Hindus of the Province of Agra, I presume, can have no objection to the Nehru Committee recommendations. On the contrary they have every reason to be satisfied with the same. And so have the Muslims too. The principles of the Nehru Report are the only principles on which a democratic Constitution for India is possible to be framed at present. It provides ample guarantees for minorities. It adequately safeguards the interests of their religion and culture and it secures to them a substantial voice and share in the political and economic activities of the nation. The Maharaja of Mahmudabad and Dr. Ansari, two of the most distinguished leaders of North India, have accepted the recommendations of the report and so have the nationalist Muslims of Bengal and the Punjab. Great credit is due to them for their broad-based patriotism. But it cannot be ignored that a sufficiently influential section of the Muslims, some of whom have so far claimed to be great nationalists, are attacking the fundamentals of the report and as objections touch the country in general and the Hindus in particular it will not be out of place to notice them here. These objections are of two kinds :

(1) Those purely of a communal nature. In this class are included :

(a) The demand for reservation of seats for Muslim minorities and majorities all over India, not for ten years but for all time to come until the Muslims themselves choose to dispense with it.

(b) The demand for the continuation of separate electorates.

(c) The demand for over-weightage in provinces as well as in the Central Legislature.

(d) The extension of communal representation to local bodies, services, universities and all other elected bodies.

(2) Those relating to the powers of the Central and the Provincial Legislatures and the fundamental nature of the Constitution.

As regards (1) I want to say that in the matter of communal representation the Hindus have accepted the recommendations of the report as the maximum that they can swallow. They will not be a party to any tampering with the same. The retention of separate electorates is altogether out of the question. Any specific over-weightages to Muslim minorities except in the shape sanctioned, either in the Provincial or in the Central legislatures shall not be agreed to. The demand for extension of communal representation to services, universities or local bodies or in any other respect is simply preposterous and no Constitution containing a provision to that effect has any chance of being accepted or approved of by any section of the Hindus. The Hindu opinion on these points is so strong, that I think I may venture to say that any attempt to make any changes in these respects will not only be stoutly opposed but will be construed as an attempt to back out of the position accepted at Lucknow. In that event the Hindus will be perfectly justified to withdraw their assent to the report. It should be understood that they stand for a complete elimination of the principle of communal representation from the Constitution of the country. If they accept the retention of it to the extent it is to be found in the report at present, they do so out of a profound sense of necessity, the necessity of reconciling Muhammadan sentiment and feeling to that extent.

Reservation for majorities is a demand opposed to all principles of democracy and they cannot agree to it, but election by the method of proportional representation is a principle which they

should have no objection to reconsider if pressed by our Muslim or Sikh countrymen. This is all I want to say about communal representation at this stage.

The controversy as to whether the form of Government in India should be Federal or Unitary is, in my judgment, futile. Let us not be slaves of words. Let us profit by the example and experience of others, but let us decide what is the best for us under the peculiar circumstances of our own country. I find that a very large number of intensely communal Muslims press for the fullest possible autonomy being given to the provinces including all the residuary powers. Some of them notably, H.H. the Aga Khan[2] and Sir Mohammad Shafi[3], seem to be completely obsessed by this idea. Sir Mohammad Shafi says :

> "In India the centripetal form of federal constitution would be in the highest degree detrimental to the legitimate interests and rights of minorities and is calculated to bring into existence an oligarchy rather than a really representative Government. The Indian Mussalmans constitute a majority of population in four out of ten provinces in British India, Burma being excluded. And if Sind were to be separated from the Bombay Presidency, they would constitute a majority in five out of the eleven provinces into which India would then be divided. But in India as a whole they occupy a numerically inferior position and would constitute a permanent minority in the Federal Parliament. The Nehru Constitution refuses to grant to them even 33 per cent. representation in the Central Legislature which they have always asked for. It is clear, in these circumstances, that a centralised form of federal Government, with all 'residuary powers' vested in a permanent majority, would make the position of Indian Mussalmans in this country unenviable."

Sir Mohammad Shafi is a lawyer, and may be presumed to know the exact meanings of the words he uses. Minorities in this sentence can only mean all-India minorities. But all-India minorities include Christians, Parsees, Jains, Sikhs, etc.

In fact groups that are in a minority in an individual State, can perhaps make a better show in the Federal Government than in

their own home States, if they are allowed to pool together for the purpose of obtaining an adequate representation in the Central Government. No Federal Constitution either centripetal or centrifugal, has so far attempted that but there is nothing to prevent its being considered. The fact is that nowhere in the world has any majority or minority been determined on religious grounds. This vicious practice is only to be found in British India.

Sir Mohammad has not told us what, in his opinion, are "the legitimate interests and rights of minorities" which will be detrimentally affected by "a centripetal form of Federal Government." Whatever the legitimate rights and interests of minorities may be, will not a system of completely autonomous provinces with "residuary powers" vested in them, be detrimental to the minorities in the provinces? The real trouble is that Sir Mohammad's conception of the interests and rights of a minority in India has no parallel in the history of the world. The "minority" which he has in view aspires to control the "majority" so effectively as to make it impotent, not only to do mischief because such a control may be welcome, but to carry on the work of government. Muslim advocates of a centrifugal form of Federal Government openly and frankly want a *carte blanche*, and free and unfettered authority to do what they like in five out of eleven provinces in which they desire India to be divided with no power in the Central Government to check the vagaries of Hindu or Muslim majority provinces. They are, of course, prepared to give the same power and authority to the Hindus in the other provinces but then they are anxious that the central power should not be strong. Their outlook is tainted with suspicion, distrust and fear. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that there are Hindus both amongst the supporters and opponents of the Nehru Committee Report, who do not want the Muslims to be invested with supreme power in the Frontier Provinces. The Nehru Committee Report is a compromise between the two. The Report concedes that in subjects handed over to the Provinces the latter should have supreme power, neither concurrent with, nor subordinate to, the Central Legislature. But they reserve the "residuary powers" in the Central Legislature. This, in my judgment, is a most satisfactory solution of the question. The whole trend of modern political practice is in this direction. We have the example of the U.S.A. before us.

As to point (b), I am frankly unable to comprehend it. If adult suffrage is going to result in an oligarchy, then no other electoral device can be suggested which would make it a real democracy. The Nehru Report wants to do away with the idea of permanent majorities or minorities. It is communal representation advocated by Sir Mohammad Shafi and the Aga Khan which makes for permanent religious majorities over minorities.

The point (c) is Sir Mohammad's real objection to the scheme propounded by the Nehru Committee. The answer to that lies in the "Declaration of fundamental rights". If any changes in schedules 1 and 2 are suggested which would satisfy our Muslim countrymen they can also be considered.

Proceeding further, Sir Mohammad discusses the problem of Indian States and triumphantly declares that there can be only one Indian confederation and not two. The position of Indian States, in a future self-governing India has been very lucidly stated in the Report. The apprehensions referred to by certain Indian Chiefs are mainly due to the limitations of the discussion in a brief chapter. A full and heart to heart discussion with representatives of Indian States will probably remove all misapprehensions and result in evolving a solution which may be acceptable to both. In any case, the legal and constitutional objections raised by the army of fabulously paid lawyers in Great Britain, are evidence of legal chicanery unheard of in the world. The absurdity and untenability of the propositions laid down by these imperialistic lawyers has already been exposed.

Coming to the views of H.H. the Aga Khan, those who had read his book called "India in Transition" published during the war, expected nothing better from him. The only interest which H.H. the Aga Khan has ever shown in Indian politics, over and above his absorbing interest in racing, and spending most of his time and money in Europe, is to occasionally sound a reactionary note. The Aga Khan has been dreaming of a South Asiatic Federation with Persia and Afghanistan as its apex, South India with Ceylon as its base, Arabia on one side and Burma on the other. According to His Highness, "self-government must develop in two lines, one being that of provincial re-arrangement with something like the unity of a nationality as far as practicable, and the other, *the separate representation within each province of religions, castes*

and communities, small and great." It should not be difficult to see what is behind the mind of one who makes a proposal of this kind. It is the absolute disintegration of the Hindu community as such, and of making the evolution of a strong united India, able to resist all attacks from outside, an impossibility. In no case will the Hindus agree to a scheme which would weaken the Central authority and divide the provinces into permanent religious majorities or minorities. The constitution of the Central authority must be free of communal considerations except for the period of ten years for which special reservation is allowed to the Mussalmans in the scheme.

I want to make it clear that this is the most fundamental basis of the structure designed by the Nehru Report, and any tinkering with it at the bidding of H.H. the Aga Khan or Sir Muhammad Shafi will mean wrecking it almost wholly. I will not speak for others, but speaking for myself, I will be no party to it. For the present I will let the matter rest here. I am whole-heartedly in favour of the Report as it is, and I would advise the Hindus all over India to accept and support it in a spirit of genuine patriotism mixed with a certain element of sportsmanship. There are risks involved in the scheme both to Hindus and Muslims. I will not discuss them. On the whole, the scheme is the fairest and soundest possible solution of our problem, conditioned and circumstanced as we are. It can be improved upon in details, but the moment you touch any of the cornerstones, that moment it falls to the ground like a pack of cards.

So much about the Report. Now as to the Simon Commission. Events have justified the boycott which my humble self inaugurated in the Legislative Assembly when proposing my resolution on the subject. Even then, I could visualise the scenes that are being enacted at Poona. The whole scheme of the Commission is dominated by one motive behind it *viz.*, that of enabling the world to see how ridiculously and childishly absurd and unfit for self-government the Indian people are. It has brought into prominence, as it was designed to do, men who are intensely communalists and entirely devoid of any faculty of constructive politics. What is happening at Poona? Reactionary Muslims, the supposed representatives of the depressed classes, the Anglo-Indians and the Europeans are having the best time of their lives.

They are vying with one another in exposing the weakest points of the Indian polity, points which have been sharpened and brought into prominent relief by the active policy of the British Government. What was achieved during the last ten years by an active policy of "divide and rule" is now publicly brought into evidence in order to make India the laughing stock of the world. Our own men are the ready tools. They are playing into the hands of the enemy. At times the official witnesses face both ways. In one breath they trace legislative and administrative inefficiency to communal representation, in the other they agree that it is the result of Shuddhi, Sanghathan, Non-co-operation and Khilafat. May I ask my friends, the co-operators, if these things were not already on the record? They had been amply brought out firstly in the memoranda of the various Governments, and secondly in the memoranda submitted by private individuals. Is there one thing new which any body has brought to light by evidence before the Commission ? I am impatiently waiting for the day when the co-operating Hindus and Muslims will be able to show that their co-operation with the Simon Commission has resulted in good to the one or the other. The decisions of the Commission have already been taken. They will find ample evidence in support of any decision they may promulgate.

The only result of the co-operation is to enable Messrs Ambedkar and Rajah[4] to cry down the caste Hindus, Sir Zulfiqar and Dr. Suhrawardy, Non-co-operation, Khilafat and Hindus. Of course bureaucracy chuckles at the scenes thus created, and they are the only parties which gain by this kind of co-operation and exhibition. Some people have already been disillusioned and are now firmly convinced of the futility of their co-operation with the Commission. If there are any still left who think that either the country or his community will gain any benefit by this co-operation, they will soon find out that they had been living in a fool's paradise. In this connection my attention has been drawn to the mischievous and false statements of facts made by Dr. Shafaat Ahmad Khan of Allahabad University in the memoranda he has drawn up in the name of and for the Muslims of U.P. I am glad that the true nature of those statements has been laid bare in the press and also by the Hindu organisations of this province. It is a pity that a Professor of History in the University should be guilty of an offence of this

kind, as it only brings the University, which employs him, to teach a subject of facts, as History is, to look ludicrous in the eyes of the world. I will, however, leave him to his own conscience, if he has any.

I am not aware of any particular political grievance of the Hindus in this province. But if there be any, the provincial and local leaders may be trusted to deal with them.

I will now turn to the social side of the Hindu problem which in my judgment is the real outstanding problem before the Hindus. If the Hindus could put their house in order socially, they need entertain no fear of any aggression against them from any quarter. The first thing which I would like the Hindus to realise is the open attempt that is being made by both the British and some sections of the Muslims to exploit the prevailing caste system for political purposes. H.H. the Aga Khan wants every caste to be separately represented in the legislatures. Sir Muhammad Shafi wants the depressed classes to be separated from the Hindus. He says they are not Hindus and should not be considered as such for political purposes. The general trend of bureaucratic policy also is towards the same direction. There are some persons among the depressed classes themselves, who are either the hired agents of the one or the other or under their influence, who are spreading the same views among these classes themselves. Again, there are some foolish Hindus as well who are consciously or unconsciously playing into the hands of the enemies by supporting the "Adi-Hindu Movement"[5] and the political claims of the latter. Some of them think that by doing so they would spur on the Hindus to remove the religious and social disabilities of the depressed classes and concede to them what is their right. I must frankly tell you that the present caste system, as it prevails today, is the greatest danger to Hinduism as a religion and to the Hindu community as a community. I won't discuss the origin, nor rights and wrongs of the system in the days when the Hindus alone lived in this country. It may have had its use in the past, but under modern conditions and today it is an anachronism of the worst type. It is an effective bar to Sanghathan. It is the negation of an organised Hindu life. The Hindu Mahasabha and other All-India Hindu movements have been passing resolutions against it and exhorting the Hindu community to revert at least to the ancient and original system of four castes. But so far these

resolutions have not produced any tangible effects. The political system that dominates in India militates against these resolutions. The preferment given to certain castes by the Government for purposes of civil and military employment, is a deadly and ever-present poison which pollutes the community in all its activities. So strong is the invidious influence of this poison that even highly educated men who do not believe in caste and whose life is an open revolt against orthodoxy are not ashamed to encourage this tendency and take personal advantage of it.

During the last elections the cry of Aggarwal for Aggarwals, Brahman for Brahmans, Jat for Jats, was raised and broadcast by some very highly educated men who ordinarily live in European style and do not observe caste rules in social life. This is a practice which is being strengthened and fortified by caste Sabhas and caste conferences. These latter are a definite danger and an effective bar to unity among the Hindus. They are the greatest and most potent enemies of the Sanghathan. Yet they are multiplying like mushrooms and being patronised and encouraged by the highest amongst us. The first and the foremost question that I wish to ask you is what are you doing to rid the Hindu community of this evil? As long as this evil persists, all your political efforts to secure for the community its rightful place in the government of the country will fail. Look at it from any point of view, national or communal, you will find that this is a poison which permeates the whole system, prevents all kinds of healthy growth, vitiates its energies, militates against unity and effectively bars all efforts to rise above petty prejudices and petty jealousies. Those who agree in this view must make a supreme effort to destroy the evil and persuade others to join hands with them in doing so.

Knowing and feeling what a great hold it still has on the mentality of the community, I will beg of you, at least, to merge all sub-divisions and sub-castes into the main castes and thus take an effective step towards the realization of the goal. I had not completed writing this sentence when I opened my mail and the first thing that fell into my hand was the presidential address of Rai Sabib Chhotu Ram, an ex-Minister of the Punjab, delivered before the Zamindars' Conference held at Lyallpur, in which he speaks with pride of his having awakened the Jat nation (*qaum*), to a consciousness of their political rights. What a mischievous and

unnatural use of the word *qaum*. I do not want the Hindus to call themselves a *qaum*, much less can the use of the term be justified for castes and sub-castes. But such is the fissiparous tendency of the times that even sub-castes clamour for a separate realization of their political rights as separate *qaums*.

Next in importance comes the physical condition of the community. Let me assure you with all the emphasis that I can put on the matter that the greatest need of the Hindu community next to its organisation on national lines is the improvement of its physical condition. A physically helpless community is at the mercy of every body. Physical disabilities sap vitality and make the person suffering therefrom unfit for the battle of life. They expose you to the ridicule and contempt of others. They are a handicap to all efforts, intellectual, moral or political. In 1925 when I had the honour of presiding at the annual session of the Mahasabha at Calcutta I drew the pointed attention of the community to this, their most pressing need. I am glad to notice signs of an awakening in this direction, but much yet remains to be done. Physical training of young people is good and useful ; physical exercise by all a necessity ; clean and sanitary houses and clean and good food will go a great way to improve health. But unless and until you change and reform your marriage laws the curse of heredity will not let you reap the full benefit of all those efforts. A human being must be well born in order to make his subsequent efforts for a good and healthy life bear proper fruit. The child of a weak, emaciated, tender mother starts life with a handicap, which accompanies him everywhere in all his activities and hampers his full growth as a man or woman. It is a matter of joy that the Hindus all over the country are now alive to the importance of the question, but this awakening has not yet assumed such proportions as would assure early steps being taken to reform the whole system. The whole system requires an immediate overhauling. Infant marriage is an abominable thing, contrary to all sense of decency and responsibility. But even early marriage is extremely detrimental to the individual as well as the race. It excites one's anger to see that even some highly educated men enjoying most of the amenities of unorthodox life should attempt to defend early marriage, and threaten that in case the marriageable age is fixed over 11 years the Sanatanists will fill the

jails. This is a gross insult to the intelligence of the Sanatanists. In Northern India there are few Hindus who object to the marriageable age being fixed beyond 12. The general consensus of opinion is that no marriage should be celebrated before 18 in the case of boys and 14 or 13 in the case of girls. The question has nothing to do with religion.

But besides it is equally important that marriages of the disproportionally unequal in ages be stopped ; that the choice of parties to the marriage be freer and more unhampered by custom ; that the custom of demanding and giving large dowries be discontinued ; and that all pecuniary considerations should be eliminated from contracts of marriage. In my judgment it is equally important that the marriages of widows, virgin or young, be encouraged, or at least all obstacles in the way be removed. Of late another evil is coming into vogue. Men contract second marriages without least compunction, deserting their first wives sometimes on the flimsiest possible grounds and without making any provision for the deserted or superceded wives and their children. The community has, moreover, seriously to consider the conditions under which civil marriages or divorces should be allowed and made legal. These are questions on which persistent propaganda is required.

I am very glad that the community has become conscious of the necessity and justice of removing the disabilities of the untouchables and of raising their social and economic status. Great progress has been made in the matter, but much still remains to be done. The Government, on which Messrs Ambedkar and Rajah so much depend, have done almost nothing in comparison with what the high caste Hindus of the type of Birlas have done or are doing. I wish you to place on record your appreciation of the step taken by the Bombay Corporation in removing all caste disabilities in the treatment of boys and girls receiving education in their schools and of your disapproval of the action of certain orthodox people who have raised a cry against the same. The prejudice against the untouchables is very deep-rooted and old and the progress we have made in counteracting it, is, in my judgment, quite satisfactory. But the battle has not been quite won, and I would beg of you all not to relax your efforts in the matter even by an iota. Every untouchable is a Hindu and for all civil purposes as good a Hindu as a Brahman.

His position as a member of the Hindu community, possessing all the civil rights of a Hindu, must be secured for him.

There are many other social questions on which I would like to say something, but I am afraid my speech has already exceeded the limits I had fixed for it, and, therefore, I must leave them for others.

NOTES

1

Page 4 1. At the Peace Conference at Versailles held at the end of the First World War, the war aims of the Allies and President Wilson's declaration regarding self-determination for subject peoples were ignored to a large extent. The Peace Treaty as finally accepted contained many provisions which were opposed to the ideals enunciated by President Wilson and other Allied leaders during the war against Germany.

Page 8 2. The massacre at Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar, took place on 13 April 1919. As a result of the indiscriminate firing by the troops under the command of General Dyer at least 400 innocent Indians were killed while the number of wounded was between a thousand and two thousands.

2

Page 12 1. The Press Act was passed by the Legislative Council of India on 8 February 1910. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, the moderate leader, did not oppose the measure in view of the conditions then prevailing in India.

Page 12 2. The Defence of India (Criminal Law Amendment) Act was passed by the Legislative Council of India on 18 March 1915. The Act vested the Government with special powers to secure public safety and the defence of British India and provided for the more speedy trial of certain offences.

Page 12 3. The war gift of 100 million pounds for the Government of Britain was provided for in the Indian Budget of 1917-18. This provision was applauded by most of the Indian members of the Legislative Council.

Page 12 4. The Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act, 1919, popularly known as Rowlatt Act, was passed on 18 March 1919 in spite of the unanimous opposition of the non-official Indian members of the Legislative Council and strong public protests throughout the country. It was placed on the Statute-book on 21 March 1919. The Act provided for speedy trial of offences by a Special Court constituted of three High Court Judges. There could be no appeal against the decision of this Court. It could meet *in camera* and take into consideration evidence not admissible under the Indian Evidence Act. The Provincial Governments could order any person *on suspicion*, "to furnish security or to notify his residence, or to reside in a particular area, or to abstain from any specified act, or finally to report himself

to the police." The Provincial Governments were also given powers to search places and arrest suspected persons without warrant and keep them in confinement, 'in such place and under such conditions and restrictions as it may specify.'

Page 13 5. Lajpat Rai's views on the Reforms Scheme of 1919 are to be found in his book, *The Political Future of India* (New York, 1919).

Page 13 6. The Government of India appointed in October 1919 a Committee to enquire into the causes of the serious disturbances which occurred in India in April 1919. The Committee was presided over by Lord Hunter and its other members were Mr. Justice G. C. Rankin, Mr. W. F. Rice, Major-General Sir George Barrow, Mr. Thomas Smith, Pandit Jagat Narain, Sir Chimanlal Harilal Setalvad and Sardar Sahibzada Sultan Ahmed Khan. The Committee's report was published in two parts—the 'majority report' signed by the five European members including the chairman and the 'minority report' signed by the three Indian members. The Government of India accepted the findings of the majority which regarded the outbreak of April 1919 as a rebellion and generally justified the imposition of martial law. In regard to Jallianwala Bagh the majority, however, disapproved General Dyer's conduct on two counts—opening of fire without warning and continuing the firing after the crowd had begun to disperse. The Secretary of State also accepted the view of the majority report and pronounced only a mild censure on Dyer and removed him from active service. Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Governor of the Punjab, and other Punjab officials were absolved of all guilt. These decisions undoubtedly caused considerable resentment among Indians.

Page 15 7. Sir Michael Francis O'Dwyer was the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab from 26 May 1913 to 27 May 1919.

Page 15 8. Mr. John Perronet Thompson was the Chief Secretary of the Punjab Government. Colonel O'Brien was the Deputy Commissioner at Gujranwala during the disturbances of April 1919.

4

Page 22 1. The reference is to Surendranath Banerjea and the founding of the Indian Association.

Page 24 2. Bal Gangadhar Tilak died on 1 August 1920.

Page 25 3. The thirty-fourth annual session of the Indian National Congress was held at Amritsar from 27 December 1919 to 1 January 1920.

Page 25 4. The decaying Ottoman Empire was dismembered during the First World War. The Sultan's government in Constantinople concluded with the Allies on 10 August 1920 the humiliating Treaty of Sevres which aimed at destroying the independence of Turkey. It roused the anger of Muslims of India beyond measure as the Sultan was also considered the Khalifa (spiritual head) of the Islamic world. They

entertained the idea of protecting the Empire and the authority of the Sultan.

Page 25 5. The Reform Rules under the Act of 1919 were published on 15 May 1920. The rules considerably whittled down the Reform Scheme, particularly in respect of the powers of the ministers in the Provinces. The rules provided for power to the Secretaries of the Provincial Governments and the Heads of Departments to take cases directly to the Governors who might overrule the ministers.

Page 25 6. The Indian National Congress Sub-Committee which was appointed on 14 November 1919 to conduct a non-official enquiry into the Punjab disturbances, consisted of Mahatma Gandhi, C. R. Das, A. Tyabji and M. R. Jayakar. Its report was submitted to the Congress President on 20 February 1920 and published in the following month.

Page 25 7. The Indian members of the Hunter Committee in the 'minority report' differed from some of the basic findings of the European members. The majority regarded the outbreak as a rebellion while the minority did not think so. The two, therefore, differed in regard to the justification for the imposition of martial law. The minority did not uphold the justification for the martial law and considered it unnecessary. They also denounced orders and punishments under the martial law which were calculated to humiliate Indians and foment racial bitterness. The majority held that the disturbances at Amritsar were anti-government at every stage, the hostility to the government merging into antipathy for Europeans. The minority held that the anti-European feelings were aroused after the firing on 10 April 1919. In regard to Dyer's conduct at Jallianwala Bagh the minority considered it inhuman and un-British.

Page 26 8. The only Indian member of the Government of India, Mian Muhammad Shafi, a man of moderate views, supported the findings of of the Indian members of the Hunter Committee. The Government of India endorsed the majority report while forwarding it to the Secretary of State.

Page 27 9. Sir Charles U. Aitchison held the office of Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab from 3 April 1882 to 1 April 1887.

Page 27 10. Sir Dennis Fitzpatrick was Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab from 5 March 1892 to 5 March 1897.

Page 30 11. The Rowlatt Bill was placed on the Statute-book on 21 March 1919.

Page 31 12. The reference is to Samuel Montagu's speech in the House of Commons on 8 July 1920. During the course of this speech he referred to the theories on which the Government in India could be carried on. He said, "If you are applying domination as your theory then it follows that you must use the sword with increasing severity

until you are driven out of the country by the united operation of the civilized world. If your theory is justice and partnership then you will condemn a soldier however gallant, who says that there is no question of undue severity and that he is teaching a moral lesson to the whole country." Mr. Montagu asked the Members of Parliament to choose between these two methods of carrying on the Government in India.

Page 31 13. General Dyer in his evidence before the Hunter Committee on 19 November 1919 justified his action at Jallianwala Bagh. He claimed that it was justifiable to fire on a crowd that had been warned not to collect and that he had made up his mind to fire immediately if his orders were not obeyed. He also admitted that the firing continued even after the crowd had started dispersing and no attempt was made to relieve the wounded. Dyer admitted that he fired "to teach a lesson, to strike terror and create a widespread effect."

Page 31 14. Dyer's case came up for discussion before the House of Lords on 19-20 July 1920. On the motion of Lord Finlay the following resolution was adopted by 129 votes against 86 :

"That this House deplores the conduct of the case of General Dyer as unjust to that officer and as establishing a precedent dangerous to the preservation of order in face of rebellion."

The resolution amounted to a vote of confidence in General Dyer.

Page 35 15. The British Government upheld the findings of the majority of the Hunter Committee in regard to the justification for the declaration and the continuance of martial law and the partial suppression of the ordinary courts of law in the Punjab districts in which martial law had been declared. The views of the British Government on the matter were conveyed to the Governor-General in Council in the Secretary of State's Public Despatch of 26 May 1920.

Page 36 16. Sir C. Sankaran Nair, Education Member, resigned from the Government of India on account of his disagreement with his colleagues on the policy pursued in dealing with the Punjab disturbances. He had earlier also disagreed with the majority of his colleagues on some important matters of public policy and written minutes of dissent to the despatches to the Secretary of State. The most significant was his minute of dissent on the first despatch on Indian Constitutional Reform of 5 March 1919.

Page 37 17. Rabindranath Tagore renounced his Knighthood in a memorable letter, dated 31 May 1919, addressed to the Viceroy, to protest against the oppressive policy of the Government in the Punjab. The title was conferred on the Poet in June 1915.

Page 37 18. Mian Muhammad Shafi was considered a 'safe man' by the bureaucracy, but he disagreed with the 'majority report' of the Hunter

Committee and supported the fiindings of the 'minority report'. He recommended the removal of General Dyer from service and payment of grants to the relatives of those killed and the wounded.

Page 37 19. Charles Freer Andrews who originally came to teach at St. Stephens College at Delhi, as a member of the Cambridge Brotherhood, soon identified himself with the Indian cause.

Page 38 20. See above page 458, note no. 4 of page 25.

Page 45 21. Colonel Josiah Clement Wedgwood (1872-1943), Member of Parliament from 1906 to 1942 was originally a liberal, but joined the Labour Party in 1919. He was a member of the Royal Commission on Mesopotamia, 1916-17. Among the causes to which he was devoted was that of Indian independence. Wedgwood was a friend of Lajpat Rai

Page 46 22. Mr. Vithalbhai J. Patel had gone to England in 1919 as a member of the Congress deputation in connection with the Reforms Bill. He returned to India on 15 January 1920 and on the following day he gave an account, in a speech at Bombay, of the difficulties he had to encounter in carrying out the mandate of the Congress. The amendments proposed by the Congress deputation to the Reform Bill were all lost.

Page 47 23. The Resolution of the Amritsar Congress (1919) on the Reforms was as follows :

"That this Congress reiterates its declaration of the last year that India is fit for full Responsible Government and repudiates all assumptions and assertions to the contrary wherever made ;

That this Congress adheres to the resolutions passed at the Delhi Congress regarding the Constitutional Reforms and is of opinion that the Reform Act is inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing ;

That this Congress further urges that Parliament should take early steps to establish full Responsible Government in India in accordance with the principle of self-determination ;

This Congress trusts that so far as may be possible they will work the Reforms so as to secure an early establishment of full Responsible Government and this Congress offers its thanks to Mr. E. S. Montagu for his labour in connection with Reforms."

Page 52 24. Dr. Saif-ud-din Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal, the two popular leaders at Amritsar were deported by the authorities to Dharamsala on 10 April 1919. Their removal from Amritsar led to serious disturbances in the city.

Page 52 25. Sir Satyendra Prasanna Sinha who was raised to baronage was appointed Under Secretary of State for India in 1919. Tej Bahadur Sapru and B N. Sarma were both appointed as Members of the Governor-General's Council in 1920.

5

Page 62 1. The first International Labour Conference met in Washington in November 1919. India being an original member of the League of Nations was represented at this Conference. The Conference adopted six draft conventions and six recommendations for improving the working conditions of labour in all countries.

Page 65 2. Bela Kun, the Bolshevik Hungarian leader, became the head of the Hungarian Government in the spring of 1919. He was known to Lenin. He carried out vigorous reforms in Hungary during his short-lived regime. He had to flee from his country and later went to Russia where he played a significant part in the affairs of the Communist Party.

6

Page 67 1. The following is the text of the Resolution on Non-co-operation passed at the special session of the Congress at Calcutta, on 8 September 1920:

"In view of the fact that on the Khilafat question both the Indian and Imperial Governments have signally failed in their duty towards Mussalmans of India, and the Prime Minister has deliberately broken his pledged word given to them and that it is the duty of every non-Moslem Indian in every legitimate manner to assist his Mussalman brother in his attempt to remove the religious calamity that has overtaken him.

And in view of the fact that in the matter of the events of the April of 1919 both the said governments have grossly neglected or failed to protect the innocent people of the Punjab and punish officers guility of unsoldierly and barbarous behaviour towards them and have exonerated Sir Michael O'Dwyer who proved himself directly responsible for most of the official crimes and callous to the sufferings of the people placed under his administration and that the Debate in the House of Lords betrayed a woeful lack of sympathy with the people of India and showed virtual support of the systematic terrorism and frightfulness adopted in the Punjab and that the latest Viceregal pronouncement is proof of entire absence of repentence in the matter of the Khilafat and the Punjab.

This Congress is of opinion that there can be no contentment in India without redress of the two afore-mentioned wrongs and that the only effectual means to vindicate national honour and to prevent a repetition of similar wrongs in future is the establishment of Swarajya.

This Congress is further of opinion that there is no course left open for the people of India but to approve of and adopt the policy of progressive, non-violent, Non-co-operation inaugurated by Mr. Gandhi until the said wrongs are righted and Swarajya is established.

And in as much as a beginning should be made by classes who

have hitherto moulded and respresented public opinion and in as much as Government consolidates its powers through titles and honours bestowed on the people, through schools controlled by it, its law courts and its Legislative Councils, and in as much as it is desirable in the prosecution of the movement to take the minimum risk and to call for the least sacrifice compatible with the attainment of the desired object, this Congress earnestly advises :

(a) surrender of titles and honorary offices and resignation from nominated seats in local bodies ;

(b) refusal to attend Government Levees, Durbars, and other official and semi-official functions held by government officials or in their honour ;

(c) gradual withdrawal of children from schools and colleges owned, aided or controlled by government and in place of such schools and colleges establishment of National Schools and Colleges in the various Provinces ;

(d) gradual boycott of British Courts by lawyers and litigants and establishment of private arbitration courts by their aid for the settlement of private disputes ;

(e) refusal on the part of the military, clerical and labouring classes to offer themselves as recruits for service in Mesopotamia ;

(f) withdrawal by candidates of their candidature for election to the Reformed Councils and refusal on the part of the voters to vote for any candidate who may, despite the Congress advice, offer himself for election ;

(g) boycott of foreign goods ;

And in as much as Non-co-operation has been conceived as a measure of discipline and self-sacrifice without which no nation can make real progress, and in as much as an opportunity should be given in the very first stage of Non-co-operation to every man, woman and child, for such discipline and self-sacrifice, this Congress advises adoption of Swadeshi in piecegoods on a vast scale; and in as much as the existing mills of India with indigenous capital and control do not manufacture sufficient yarn and sufficient cloth for the requirements of the nation, and are not likely to do so for a long time to come, this Congress advises immediate stimulation of further manufacture on a large scale by means of reviving hand-spinning in every home and hand-weaving on the part of the millions of weavers who have abandoned their ancient and honourable calling for want of encouragement."

The Resolution was moved by Mahatma Gandhi and seconded by Dr. Saif-ud-din Kitchlew.

The following is the text of the resolution on Non-co-operation as passed at the Nagpur Congress on 30 December 1920 :

"Whereas in the opinion of the Congress the existing Government of India has forefeited the confidence of the country and whereas the people of India are now determined to establish Swaraj and whereas all methods adopted by the people of India prior to the last special session of the Indian National Congress have failed to secure due recognition of their rights and liberties, and the redress of their many and grievous wrongs more specially in reference to the Khilafat and the Punjab, now this Congress, while reaffirming the resolution on non-violent non-co-operation passed at the special session of the Congress at Calcutta, declares that the entire or any part or parts of the scheme of non-violent non-co-operation with the renunciation of voluntary association with the present government at one end and the refusal to pay taxes at the other should be put in force at a time to be determined by either the Indian National Congress or the All-India Congress Committee and that in the meanwhile to prepare the country for it, effective steps should continue to be taken in that behalf (*a*) by calling upon the parents and guardians of school children (and not the children themselves) under the age of sixteen years to make greater efforts for the purpose of withdrawing them from such schools as are owned, aided or in any way controlled by government and concurrently to provide for their training in National Schools or by such other means as may be within their power in the absence of such schools, (*b*) by calling upon students of the age of sixteen and over to withdraw without delay irrespective of consequences from institutions owned, aided or in any way controlled by Government, if they feel that it is against their conscience to continue in institutions which are dominated by a system of Government which the nation has solemnly resolved to bring to an end, and advising such students either to devote themselves to some special service in connection with the non-co-operation movement or to continue their education in National institutions; (*c*) by calling upon trustees, managers and teachers of Government affiliated or aided schools and municipalities and Local Boards to help to nationalise them, (*d*) by calling upon lawyers to make greater efforts to suspend their practice and to devote their attention to national service including boycott of law courts by litigants and fellow-lawyers and the settelment of disputes by private arbitration, (*e*) in order to make India economically independent and self-contained by calling upon merchants and traders to carry out a general boycott of foreign trade relations, to encourage hand-spinning and hand-weaving and in that behalf in having a scheme of economic boycott planned and formulated by a committee of experts to be nominated by the All-India Congress Committee, (*f*) and generally in as much as self-sacrifice is essential to the success of non-co-operation by calling upon every section and every man and woman in the country to make the utmost possible contribution of self-sacrifice to the national movement, (*g*) by organising committees in each village or group of villages with a provincial central organisation in the

principal cities of each province for the purpose of accelerating the progress of non-co-operation, (*h*) by organising a band of national workers for a service to be called the Indian National Service, (*i*) by taking effective steps to raise National fund to be called the All-India Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund for the purpose of financing the foregoing national service and the non-co-operation movement in general.

This Congress congratulates the nation for the progress made so far in working the programme of non-co-operation specially with regard to the boycott of Councils by the voters and claims in the circumstances in which they have been brought into existence that the new Councils do not represent the country and trusts that those who have allowed themselves to be elected in spite of the deliberate abstention from the polls of an over-whelming majority of their constituents will see their way to resign their seats in the Councils, and that if they retain their seats in spite of the declared wish of their constituencies in direct negation of the principle of democracy the electors will studiously refrain from asking any political service from such councillors.

This Congress recognises the growing friendliness between the police and the soldiers and the people, and hopes that the former will refuse to subordinate their creed and country to the fulfilment of orders of their officers and by courteous and considerate behaviour towards the people will remove the reproach hitherto levelled against them that they are devoid of any regard for the feelings and sentiments of their own people, and this Congress appeals to all people in government employment pending the call of the nation for the resignation of their service to help the national cause by importing greater kindness and stricter honesty in their dealings with their people and fearlessly and openly to attend all popular gatherings whilst refraining from taking any active part therein and more specially by openly rendering financial assistance to the national movements.

This Congress desires to lay special emphasis on non-violence being the integral part of the non-co-operation movement and invites the attention of the people to the fact that non-violence in word and deed is as essential between people themselves as in respect of the Government and this Congress is of opinion that the spirit of violence is not only contrary to the growth of a true spirit of democracy but actually retards the enforcement (if necessary) of the other stages of non-co-operation.

Finally in order that the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs may be redressed and Swarajya established within one year, this Congress urges upon all bodies whether affiliated to the Congress or otherwise to devote their exclusive attention to the promotion of non-violence and non-co-operation with the Government and in as much as the

movement of non-co-operation can only succeed by a complete co-operation amongst the people themselves, this Congress calls upon the public associations to advance Hindu-Muslim unity and the Hindu delegates of this Congress call upon the leading Hindus to settle all disputes between Brahmans and non-Brahmans wherever they may be existing and respectfully urges the religious heads to help the growing desire to reform Hinduism in the matter of its treatment of the suppressed classes."

The Resolution was moved by C. R. Das, seconded by Mahatma Gandhi and supported by Messrs Pal, Lajpat Rai, Syam Sunder Chakravarty, Saif-ud-din Kitchlew, Hakim Ajmal Khan, K. Iyengar, J. L. Bannerjee and others.

7

Page 72 1. The following is the text of the resolution on the Congress creed as moved by Mahatma Gandhi on 28 December 1920 at the Nagpur Congress:

"The object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of Swarajya by the people of India by all legitimate and peaceful means."

Page 72 2. The Convention Committee for making a Constitution for the Congress, which was appointed by the National Convention held at Surat on 28 December 1907 after the Congress had been adjourned *sine die*, met on 18-19 April 1908 and drew up a Constitution for the Indian National Congress. The "Creed" of the Congress was embodied in Article I of the Constitution which read :

"The objects of the Indian National Congress are the attainment by the people of India of a system of Government similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing members of the British Empire, and a participation by them in the rights and responsibilities of the Empire on equal terms with those members. These objects are to be achieved by constitutional means, by bringing about a steady reform of the existing system of administration, and by promoting national unity, fostering public spirit, and developing and organising the intellectual, moral, economic and industrial resources of the country."

Article II stated that "every delegate to the Indian National Congress shall express in writing his acceptance of the objects of the Congress as laid down in Article I of this Constitution, and his willingness to abide by this Constitution." Annie Besant, *How India Wrought for Freedom*, pp. 470-71.

Page 74 3. Three British friends of the Congress—Josiah C. Wedgwood, Ben Spoor and Holford Knight—attended the Nagpur Congress.

Page 74 4. The reference is to the despatch from the Secretary of State to the Governor-General in Council, No. 108 (Public) dated 26 May 1920. In this, His Majesty's Government expressed their appreciation

of the services of Sir Michael O'Dwyer during his administration of the Punjab.

Page 74 5. Lord Selbourne speaking in the House of Lords on 30 November 1920 said :

"I hear from authority which I cannot doubt that at no moment of our connection with India has there been a greater, a more malignant and a more presistent system of calumnies and lies than exists at the present moment, flooding India against the intentions of the Indian Government and of His Majesty's Government and the whole British policy towards India. I am told, on authority which I cannot doubt, that these calumnies and lies are being believed. Why? Because the Government of India remains dumb. I am told that the most dire consequences may possibly ensue from the campaign of calumny which is going on; yet notwithstanding our recommendation, notwithstanding the experience of the past, I am told that nothing serious, nothing really important in the way of propaganda is being done to counteract this campaign which, as we all know, is directed against British rule in India."

Lord Selbourne wanted the Government to take effective steps to check this propaganda.

Page 77 6. The Congress boycotted the first general elections to the Central Legislative Assembly as well as the Provincial Assemblies in 1920 under the Reform Scheme of 1919. A large proportion of voters abstained from voting in this election because of the boycott policy of the Congress.

8

Page 81 1. The D. A. V. College, Lahore was started in 1889 and was affiliated to the Punjab University.

Page 82 2. The reference is to the following statement by Lajpat Rai on page 201, *The Political Future of India* (1919) :

"The civilization of Europe, as we have known is dying. It may take decades or perhaps a century or more to die. But *die it must.* This War has prepared a death bed for it from which it will never rise. Upon its ruins is rising, or will rise, another civilization which will reproduce much of what was valuable and precious in our own with much of what we never had."

See also Lajpat Rai, *Writings and Speeches*, Vol. I, p. 343.

9

Page 88 1. The Congress Working Committee in, its session on 11 and 12 February 1922 at Bardoli, passed the following Resolutions suspending the Civil Disobedience Movement in view of the violent behaviour of the mob at Chauri Chaura :

(1) The Working Committee deplores the inhuman conduct of the mob at Chauri Chaura in having brutally murdered Constables and senselessly burnt the Police *Thana* and tenders its sympathy to the families of the bereaved.

(2) In spite of the nation's repeated warnings, every time mass Civil Disobedience has been imminent, some popular violent outburst has taken place, indicating that the atmosphere of the country is not non-violent enough for mass Civil Disobedience, the latest incidents being the tragic and terrible events at Chauri Chaura near Gorakhpur. The Working Committee of the Congress, therefore, resolves that the mass Civil Disobedience as contemplated at Bardoli and elsewhere be suspended and instructs the local Congress Committees forthwith to advise the cultivators to pay the land revenue and other taxes due to the Government, the payment of which might have been suspended in anticipation of mass Civil Disobedience, and instructs them to suspend every other preparatory activity of an offensive nature.

(3) The suspension of mass Civil Disobedience shall be continued till the atmosphere is so non-violent as to ensure the non-repetition of popular atrocities, such as at Gorakhpur, or hooliganism, such as at Bombay and Madras respectively on the 17th of November 1921, and 15th of January last, until it is revised by the All-India Congress Committee at its special session to be forthwith convened for confirmation, revision or rejection, as the case may be, of the decision of the Working Committee.

(4) In order to promote a peaceful atmosphere, the Working Committee advises till further instructions all Congress organisations to stop activities specially designed to court arrest and imprisonment, save the normal Congress activities including voluntary hartals, wherever an absolutely peaceful atmosphere can be assured and, for that end, all picketing shall be stopped save for the *bona fide* and peaceful purpose of warning the visitors to liquor shops against the evils of drinking. Such picketing is to be controlled by men of maturity and known good character.

(5) The Working Committee advises, till further instructions, the stoppage of all Volunteer processions and public meetings merely for the purpose of defiance of the notifications regarding such meetings. This, however, shall not interfere with the private meetings of the Congress and other Committees or public meetings which are required for the conduct of the normal activities of the Congress.

(6) Complaints have been brought to the notice of the Working Committee that *Ryots* are not paying rents to the Zamindars,

the Working Committee advises Congress workers and organizations to inform the *Ryots* that such withholding of rents is contrary to the resolutions of the Congress and that, it is injurious to the best interest of the country.

(7) The Working Committee assures the *Zamindars* that the Congress movement is in no way intended to attack their just and lawful rights and that, even where the *Ryots* have grievances, the Committee desires that redress should be sought by mutual consultations and by the usual recourse to arbitration.

(8) Complaints having been brought to the notice of the Working Committee that in the formation of Volunteer Corps, great laxity prevails in the selection and that insistence is not laid on the full use of hand-spun and hand-woven Khaddar and on the full observance by the Hindus of the rule as to the removal of untouchability, nor is care being taken to ascertain that the candidates believe fully in the observance of non-violence in word and deed, in terms of the Congress Resolution, the Working Committee calls upon all Congress organisations to revise their lists and remove from them the names of all such Volunteers as do not strictly conform to the requirements of the pledge.

9) The Working Committee is of opinion that unless Congressmen carry out to the full the Congress Constitution and the Resolutions from time to time issued by the Working Committee, it is not possible to achieve the objects expeditiously or at all.

Page 90 2. This speech was delivered on 4 April 1921 and contained a powerful indictment of the Moderate party. For full text of the speech see the *Tribune* of 12 April 1921.

Page 90 3. The Moderate leaders who joined the Government of India and the Provincial Ministeries generally approved and sanctioned the repressive policy of the Government in regard to the non-co-operation and the Khilafat movements during 1921-22.

Page 91 4. G. K. Gokhale did not oppose the principle of the Press Act (1910), in view of the situation in the country. Mr. Gokhale, however, moved several amendments during the consideration of the Bill inthe Legislative Council to make its provisions less stringent and to limit its operation to three years. These amendments were not accepted by the Government. See T. V. Parvate, *Gopal Krishna Gokhale*, pp. 289-91.

Page 91 5. The Repressive Laws Committee was appointed in pursuance of Srinivasa Sastri's motion in the Council of State on 14 February 1921 "to examine the repressive laws now on the Statute-book and report whether, all or any of them should be repealed." The unanimous report of the Committee was issued on 20 September

1921. The Committee recommended the repeal of all the Statutes included in the terms of reference with the exception of the Bengal Regulation of 1818. It advised that the "repeal of the Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act and Part II of the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908 be deferred for the present; their retention being necessary in view of the recent occurrences and the possible developments."

Page 91 6. C. R. Das had moved an amendment to Mahatma Gandhi's resolution on non-co-operation at the Subjects Committee meeting of the Special Congress at Calcutta but it was lost along with Bepin Chandra Pal's amendment which was virtually in supersession of the resolution. In the open session Mr. Das supported Mr. Pal's amendment which was as follows:

"Whereas in the matter of the events of April 1919 both the Indian and the Imperial Governments have grossly neglected or failed to protect the innocent people of the Punjab and punish officers guilty of unsoldierly and barbarous behaviour towards them and have exonerated Sir Michael O' Dwyer, who proved himself directly or indirectly responsible for most of the official crimes and callous to the sufferings of the people placed under his administration and the debate in the House of Commons and specially in the House of Lords betrayed a woeful lack of sympathy with the people of India and showed virtual support of the terrorism and frightfulness adopted in the Punjab;

And whereas the bullk of the European community in India, officials and non-officials, have expressed their sympathy with the said policy of terrorism and frightfulness and are actively raising funds or taking other steps to honour those who have been proved to be guilty of acts of frightfulness and terrorism;

And whereas on the Khilafat question both the Indian and the Imperial Governments have signally failed in their duty towards the Mussalmans of India, and the Prime Minister has deliberately broken his pledged word given to them;

And whereas the disintegration of the Turkish Empire and its division into vassal states as proposed in the Peace Treaty is a source of prospective danger to India;

And whereas the only effective remedy against these wrongs and the only guarantee against their recurrence is the immediate recognition of India's right to full autonomy;

Be it resolved—

(a) That the Prime Minister be asked to receive a mission composed of representative Indians to be selected by the All-India Congress Committee to lay before him the statement of India's grievances coupled with a demand for immediate autonomy.

(b) That in the case of his refusal to receive this mission or in the event of his refusal to replace the Reforms Act of 1919 by a measure granting full autonomv to India, a policy of such active Non-co-operation be adopted as would leave no doubt in the minds of the British people that India can no longer be governed as a dependency.

(c) That in the meantime this Congress recommends to the country for favourable consideration and eventual adoption of Mahatma Gandhi's programme of Non-co-operation with such modifications, alterations and additions, either for the whole of India or for particular Provinces to suit special conditions as may be recommended by a Joint Committee consisting of:

1. Twenty representatives of the Indian National Congress.
2. Five representatives of the All-India Moslem League.
3. Five representatives of the Central Khilafat Committee.
4. Five representatives of each of such Home Rule Leagues as accept the principle of Non-co-operation.

with Mahatma Gandhi as the President of the Joint Committee.

(d) That in the meantime this Congress recommends the immediate adoption of the following measures as preparatory to the actual putting into practice of Mahatma Gandhi's programme:

1. The education of the electorates in the principles of Non-co-operation.
2. The establishment of National Schools.
3. The establishment of Courts of arbitration.
4. Renunciation of titles and such honourary offices as are not conferred by the suffrage of the people.
5. Refusal to attened Government levees, Durbars and such other functions.
6. The organisation of labour into trade unions.
7. The gradual withdrawal of Indian capital from European Banks and such other industrial and commercial concerns in India as are controlled by Europeans and also of Indian labour from such concerns.
8. Refusal on the part of the military, clerical and labouring classes to offer themselves as recruits for service outside India except in the event of foreign invasion.
9. Adoption of Swadeshi, specially in piecegoods, on a vast scale and revival of hand-spinning and hand-weaving."

Mahatma Gandhi's motion was carried by 1826 votes against 884.

Page 92 7. Tilak Swaraj Fund started in 1920 by the Congress in the memory of B. G. Tilak for financing national service and non-co-operation movement. A sum of about ten million rupees was collected for the fund.

Page 92 8. Maulana Shaukat Ali and Maulana Mohamed Ali, the two brothers who were extremist leaders of the Khilafat movement.

Page 93 9. The reference is to the ghastly mob outrage at Chauri Chaura (Gorakhpur District) on 5 February in which twenty-two policemen were burnt to death.

Page 95 10. The Malaviya Conference met at Bombay on 14-15 January 1922. It was a conference of leaders of all shades of political views arranged under the lead of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. The majority of those who attended were Moderate leaders or non-partymen. Prominent Congress leaders were in prison at this time but Mahatma Gandhi was present. The Conference wanted efforts to be made for an honourable peaceful settlement with the Government in view of the grave situation in the country. Mahatma Gandhi in his speech at the Conference insisted on the release of all political prisoners before the proposal for a round table conference could be accepted. He felt that a favourable atmosphere for a settlement with the Government could not be created unless the Government retraced its steps.

Page 96 11. Mahatma Gandhi wrote his 'open letter' to the Viceroy on 1 February 1922 preparatory to the launching of mass civil disobedience movement at Bardoli. This was treated by the Government as an ultimatum.

10

Page 97 1. Reference is to Sir Asutosh Chaudhuri who was knighted in 1917.

Page 101 2. The First International Labour Conference held in November 1919 in Washington. An Indian, Sir Atul Chatterji, was included in the delegation from British India.

Page 101 3. V. Srinivasa Sastri, Gokhale's successor as the First Member of the Servants of India Society, was consistently opposed to the non-co-operation movement. He believed in co-operation with Britain and India's advance towards Dominion Status by constitutional means only.

Page 103 4. *Life of Parnell* by R. B. O'Brien published in 1899.

Page 113 5. Sir William Henry Hoare Vincent was Home Member of the Government of India from 2 April 1917 to 2 December 1922 with a break from 13 October 1917 to 15 February 1918. Sir Malcolm Hailey was the Home Member in the Government of India from 3 December 1922 to 30 March 1924.

Sir S. Harcourt Butler was Governor of the United Provinces from 15 February 1918 to 21 December 1922. Sir George A. Lloyd was the Governor of Bombay from 16 December 1918 to 9 December 1923.

Page 118 6. Lord Reading assumed office of the Viceroy and Governor-General of India on 2 April 1921. Tej Bahadur Sapru became Law Member of the Government of India on 23 December 1920 ; he resigned on 2 January 1923. Mian Muhammad Shafi was appointed Education Member of the Government of India on 28 July 1919 and B. N. Sarma was appointed Member for Revenue and Agriculture on 16 July 1920.

12

Page 128 1. Viscount Morley was Secretary of State for India from 11 December 1905 to 6 November 1910 and again from 7 March 1911 to 24 May 1911. Earl of Crewe was Secretary of State for India from 25 May 1911 to 26 May 1915.

Lord Hardinge was Governor-General of India from 23 November 1910 to 4 April 1916. Earl of Reading was Governor-General from 2 April 1921 to 5 August 1925.

Baron Carmichael was Governor of Bengal from 1 April 1912 to 26 March 1917 and the Earl of Ronaldshay held this office from 26 March 1917 to 22 March 1922.

Earl Sydenham (Sir G. S. Clarke) was Governor of Bombay from 18 October 1907 to 4 April 1913 and Lord Willingdon held this office from 4 April 1913 to 16 Deeember 1918.

13

Page 133 1. The reference is to the brutal beating by the Police of Akali volunteers who offered non-violent resistance in August 1922 at the *Guru-ka-Bagh* shrine as a part of the movement for the purification of the Sikh shrines.

14

Page 137 1. This took place on 5 February 1922 ; twenty-two policemen were killed as a result of mob violence.

Page 137 2. The All-India Congress Committee met at Delhi on 24 February 1922 to consider the Bardoli resolution of the Congress Working Committee in regard to the suspension of mass civil disobedience movement. The Bardoli resolution was approved though there was opposition from delegates from the Punjab, Bengal and Maharashtra.

Page 138 3. Mahatma Gandhi was arrested at Ahmedabad on 10 March 1922 on charges of sedition for some writings in the *Young India*. He was sentenced to six years' simple imprisonment.

Page 138 4. The Indian National Congress annual session was held at Gaya from 26 December to 31 December 1922. Following is the text of Resolution VII on Civil Disobedience :

"This Congress reaffirms its opinion that Civil Disobedience is the only civilized and effective substitute for an armed rebellion when every other remedy for preventing the arbitrary, tyrannical and emasculating use of authority has been tried ;

And in view of the widespread awakening of the people to a sense of urgent need for Swarajya and the general demand and necessity for Civil Disobedience in order that the national goal may be speedily attained and in view of the fact that the necessary atmosphere of non-violence has been preserved in spite of all provocation ;

This Congress calls upon all Congress workers to complete the preparations for offering Civil Disobedience by strengthening and expanding the National Organisation and to take immediate steps for the collection of at least Rs. 25 lakhs for the Tilak Swarajya Fund and the enrolment of at least 50,000 volunteers, satisfying the condition of the Ahmedabad pledge by a date to be fixed by the A. I. C. C. at Gaya, and empowers the Committees to issue necessary instructions for carrying this resolution into practical effect."

The passing of this resolution was a victory for the 'No-changers' in the Congress.

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Page 142 1. Dr. Saif-ud-din Kitchlew of Amritsar who became prominent as a leader of the Khilafat movement in 1919.

Page 142 2. The Cocanada session of the Indian National Congress was held on 28 December 1923 to 1 January 1924, under the presidentship of Maulana Mohamed Ali.

Page 144 3. Reference is to a meeting held on 3 December 1921. This meeting was held with full knowledge of the fact that the district of Lahore was a 'proclaimed' area under the Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act. All the members of the Committee—39 in number—attended the meeting fully prepared to suffer the consequences, should the District Magistrate look upon the holding of the meeting as an act in contravention of the provisions of the Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act. The District Magistrate regarded the meeting as illegal and arrested Lala Lajpat Rai, Pandit K. Santhanam, Dr. Gopi Chand, Malik Lal Khan and forcibly dispersed the meeting.

Page 145 4. There were communal riots in 1922 in Bengal and the Punjab; the most serious one took place at Multan in September. This

arose out of a dispute about the Muharram procession and was responsible to a large extent for reviving communal differences.

Page 147 5. In view of the serious communal disturbances an attempt was made by leaders of Hindu and Muslim communities to draw up a formal agreement for guiding the relations between the communities and a Sub-Committee was appointed by the Congress at its special session held at Delhi in September 1923 for this purpose. A draft of the National Pact was prepared by Lala Lajpat Rai and Dr. M. A. Ansari with the help of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad which was considered by the Subjects Committee of the Indian National Congress at Cocanada in December 1923. The Subjects Committee was in favour of further consideration of the Pact and referred it back to the Sub-Committee.

The draft of the Indian National Pact was made public in January 1924 to facilitate public discussion on it. The Pact reaffirmed the demand for complete Swaraj and the formation of a federal and democratic type of government after Swaraj had been achieved. Hindustani in Devanagari or Urdu was to be the National language. It provided for full religious liberty but no public funds were to be spent on denominational institutions. There was to be no communal, colour or caste distinction in public services and educational institutions. It provided for joint electorates with reservation of seats for different communities according to their numerical strength in the constituencies. The Muslims were to give up cow-slaugher and the Hindus were to refrain from playing music before mosques. For full text of the Pact see the *Tribune*, 31 January 1924.

Page 150 6. C. Rajagopalachari was the chief spokesman of the group of Congress leaders who were opposed to changes in the non-co-operation programme as adopted at the Nagpur Congress in 1920. They were known as "No-changers". This group included besides C. Rajagopalachari, Babu Rajendra Prasad and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

Page 151 7. The All-India Congress Committee met at Bezwada on 31 March 1921 and passed the following resolution on Civil Disobedience :

(a) The All-India Congress Committee is of opinion that the orders of the officials in various Provinces against Non-co-operators in pursuit of the policy of repression are totally unwarranted by the situation in the country and are in most cases pronounced by the highest legal opinion to be illegal.

(b) Whilst the Committee believe that the country has responded in a wonderful manner and in the face of grave provocation by Government to the principle of non-violence enjoined by Congress in the country's pursuit after Swaraj and redress of Khilafat and Punjab wrongs.

(c) This Committee is of opinion that, apart from the fact that Civil Disobedience is not expressly compromised in the Congress resolution relating to Non-co-operation the country is not yet sufficiently disciplined, organised or ripe for the immediate taking up of Civil Disobedience.

(d) This Committee by way of preparation, therefore, advises all those upon whom orders may be served voluntarily to conform to them and trusts that new workers will take the place of those who may be disabled by the Government, and that people at large instead of becoming disheartened or frightened by such orders will continue their work of quiet organisation and construction sketched by the Congress resolution.

The Resolution was passed after a heated debate and Civil Disobedience was postponed for the time being.

Page 151 8. A special session of the Congress was held at Delhi in September 1923 under the Presidentship of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad mainly with a view to decide whether Congressmen as such should participate in the elections. A compromise was reached. The compromise resolution while reaffirming the faith of the Congress in non-co-operation gave the liberty to those Congressmen who had no religious or other conscientious objections against entering the Legislatures "to stand for elections and exercise their right of vote at the then impending general election." After making it plain that all propaganda in favour of Council boycott was to be suspended the resolution further urged Congressmen to redouble their efforts in carrying out 'constructive programme' with a view to obtaining Swaraj at the earliest possible moment.

The resolution was affirmed at the Cocanada session of the Congress in December 1923.

Page 154 9. The National College at Lahore started as a part of the programme for boycott of educational institutions affiliated to the Universities.

Page 154 10. The Akali Dal and the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee were declared unlawful bodies by the Punjab Government on 18 October 1923 during the movement for removing the corrupt control of Mahants over the Sikh Gurdwaras.

Page 155 11. A serious Hindu-Muslim riot took place at Saharanpur on 24 August 1923.

16

Page 159 1. Lord Dufferin, Governor-General of India, 1884-88, and Sir Auckland Colvin, Lieutenant-Governor of North-Western Provinces, 1887-1892, encouraged the Muslim separatist movement under the leadership of Sir Syed Ahmed as a counterpoise to the rising influence of the Indian National Congress.

Page 160 2. Muhammad Iqbal, the celebrated Muslim poet, was knighted in 1922. By this time he was opposed to Indian nationalism and the Indian National Congress.

Page 161 3. Mahatma Gandhi was arrested on 10 March 1922 at Ahmedabad and sentenced to six years' imprisonment.

Page 164 4. The Congress demand for reform in 1916 was embodied in the Congress-League Scheme adopted at Lucknow. Also see Volume I, pp. 408-9

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Page 170 1. Swami Shraddhanand preached from the pulpit of Jama Masjid at Delhi during the Rowlatt Bills agitation.

Page 171 2. Mahatma Gandhi was released unconditionally on 5 February 1924 on medical advice and the unexpired portion of his sentence was remitted by the Government.

Page 171 3. Mahatma Gandhi's statement was issued on 29 May 1924. It contained a detailed analysis of the Hindu-Muslim conflict in India.

Page 172 4. Mian Fazl-i-Husain, a prominent Muslim leader of the Punjab was a Minister in the Punjab Government from 1921 to 1925 and made an effort to give larger share to Muslims in the Punjab Government services. This was resented by Hindus.

Swami Shraddhanand (Mahatma Munshi Ram) the leader of the Gurukula section of the Arya Samaj, was leading in 1924 the movement for *Shuddhi* (conversion to Hinduism) and Hindu *Sanghathan* which was the cause of considerable Hindu-Muslim tension.

Page 173 5. Serious communal riots took place at Kohat on 9-10 September 1924. Hindus suffered heavily in these riots and virtually all Hindu inhabitants of the town were removed to Rawalpindi for safety. Mahatma Gandhi undertook a twenty-one days fast as a penance for the communal riots from 17 September 1924 at Delhi. The fast ended on 8 October.

Page 174 6. The Unity Conference met at Delhi on 26 September 1924 under the presidentship of Pandit Motilal Nehru. The Conference passed several resolutions on Hindu-Muslim relations. By one of the resolutions the Conference set up a Central National Panchayat with powers to organize local Panchayats.

Page 178 7. *Sati* was declared illegal by William Bentinck on 4 December 1829 in the Bengal Presidency. Various measures were adopted by the Government from 1795 onwards to stop female infanticide among different classes of the Indian people, particularly among the Rajputs.

Page 186 8. Turkey was declared a Republic on 29 October 1923 under Mustafa Kamal and on 3 March 1924 the Great National Assembly of Turkey abolished the Caliphate. This was an important step in the process of secularization of the State and modernization of Turkey.

A new constitution was promulgated in Egypt on 19 April 1923 and a Parliament was established. The new constitution was based on principles of liberal nationalism which formed a radical departure from traditional Islamic doctrines. The secularization of Turkey under Kamal Ataturk had a deep impact on Egypt and under Zaghlul Pasha, who assumed power in 1924, Egpyt too started on the road to gradual secularization of the State.

Page 188 9. S. E. Stokes, an American missionary, who became naturalized Indian and accepted Hinduism. He settled at Kotgarh in Simla Hills and was imprisoned during the Non-co-operation movement.

Page 188 10. The reference is to three eminent British Jews—Benjamin Disraeli, Prime Minister of Britain, 1874-80 and 1898 ; E. S. Montagu, Secretary of State for India, 1917-22 and Earl of Reading, Governor-General of India, 1921-25.

Page 191 11. Jamait-ul-Ulema-i-Hind, religio-political association of Muslim divines (*Ulemas*) was founded in 1919 in the wake of the Khilafat movement. It was set up with the object of safeguarding the 'Shariah' and giving the Muslims religious and political guidance according to the tenets of Islam. During the days of the Non-co-operation movement the Jamait worked for Hindu-Muslim accord. See Ziah-ul-Hasan Faruki, *The Deoband School and the Demand for Pakistan* (Bombay, 1963), pp. 67-69.

Page 194 12. The *Comrade*, an English weekly, published by Maulana Mohamed Ali, orginally from Calcutta and later from Delhi. The first issue of the paper was dated 4 January 1911.

Page 195 13. Separate communal electorates for Muslims were first introduced by the Indian Councils Act of 1909 when John Morley was the Secretary of State for India.

Page 195 14. The Congress-League Pact concluded in 1916 at Lucknow conceded the principle of separate electorates for Muslims.

Page 196 15. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan died on 27 March 1898.

Page 197 16. The reference is to Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal.

Page 200 17. Lala Lajpat Rai visited Constantinople on his return from England in August 1924.

Page 203 18. An Irish lady, named Margaret Noble, who was an ardent disciple of Swami Vivekanand.

Page 204 19. Lajpat Rai believed in the theory that the Congress was organized by Allan Octavian Hume with the blessings of Lord

Dufferin as a 'safety-valve' in view of the rising discontent in the country. He first gave expression to this view in his *Young India* published in 1916.

Page 205 **20**. Mazhar-ul-Haq (1865-1930) was one of the founders of Muslim League in 1906 and was its President in 1915. He was mainly responsible for bringing about an accord between the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League at Lucknow in 1916. He supported Mahatma Gandhi in the Champaran campaign (1917) and became a non-co-operator in 1920. Mazhar-ul-Haq was one of the founders of the Bihar Vidyapith and the Sadaqat Ashram, Patna, both important centres of political education and agitation in Bihar.

Page 208 **21**. The Malkanas who lived mostly in the U. P. districts of Agra, Aligarh and Muthra were orginally Hindu Rajputs. They had accepted Islam but followed Hindu social customs. Arya Samaj missionaries made efforts to reclaim them to Hindufold and Muslim missionaries worked in opposition to them.

Page 208 **22**. Serious Hindu-Muslim riots took place at Multan in September 1922 in consequence of a dispute between the two communities arising out of the Muharram procession.

Page 208 **23**. The part of the Resolution passed at the Unity Conference on 26 September 1924 dealing with Hindu-Muslim relations contained the following clause with regard to proselytising work—

'That every individual or group is at liberty to convert or reconvert another by argument or persuasion, but must not attempt to do so, or prevent its being done by force, fraud or other unfair means, such as the offering of material inducement. Persons under 16 years of age should not be converted unless it be along with their parents or guardians. If any person under 16 years of age is found stranded without his parents or guardians by persons of another faith, he should be promptly handed over to persons of his own faith. There must be no secrecy about any conversion or reconversion.'

Page 209 **24**. This was decided at the Khilafat Conference held at Cocanada in December 1923.

Page 210 **25**. M. A. Jinnah demanded in 1924 separate electorates for Muslims with a fixed number of seats in every legislature in the country. Speaking under the auspices of the Bombay Provincial Muslim League in October 1924 on Hindu-Muslim Unity, M. A. Jinnah urged the extension of communal representation to Municipalities, Local Boards and Public Services.

Page 213 **26**. A Hindu-Muslim pact in respect of Bengal was made in 1923 by C. R. Das and Muslim Leaders.

Its main provisions were :

1. Representation in the Legislative Council on the population basis with separate electorates.
2. Representation to local bodies to be in proportion of 60 to 40 in every district—60 to the community which was in majority and 40 to the minority.
3. Fifty-five per cent. of the Government posts to be reserved for Muslims.
4. No music to be allowed before mosques.
5. No interference with cow killing for religious sacrifices but cows to be killed in such a manner as not to wound the religious feelings of the Hindus.

There was strong opposition to the Pact even in the Congress.

Page 213 27. Maulana Hasrat Mohani was an extremist leader of the Khilafat party. He presided over the annual session of the Muslim League held at Ahmedabad in December 1921.

Page 213 28. Fazl-i-Husain as Education Minister in the Punjab Government, 1921-25, adopted various measures to advance specially education of Muslims and provide posts in the public services irrespective of merit. This caused resentment among the educated Hindu community of the Punjab as its members suffered a good deal.

Page 214 29. Sir Edward D. Maclagan was the Governor of the Punjab from 27 May 1919 to 30 May 1924. Sir John Maynard was a member of the Executive Council of the Governor, Punjab, from 1921 to 1926. He was the Financial Commissioner, Punjab, prior to his appointment as a member of the Council,

Page 220 30. Dr. Zia-ud-din Ahmed (1879-1947) was a pro-government Muslim leader. He was Pro-Vice Chancellor, Muslim University, Aligarh, 1920-28 and Vice-Chancellor, 1935-38. Dr. Zia-ud-din Ahmed was knighted in 1938.

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Page 223 1. When Pandit Motilal Nehru opposed the Finance Bill on 18 March 1925 in the Legislative Assembly there was an argument between M. A. Jinnah, the leader of the Independents, and the leader of the Swaraj Party. The Independents did not vote with the Swarajists and the Finance Bill was passed.

Page 224 2. In the 1923 general elections to the Provincial Legislative Councils the Swaraj Party captured majority of seats only in the Central Provinces and the Ministers appointed in that Province had to resign because of the total rejection of the Provincial Budget in 1924. In the Bengal Legislative Council the Swarajist members formed the single largest group and succeeded in refusing salaries to the Ministers who had to resign. In these circumstances the

Governor assumed charge of the transferred departments also. In the other provinces the Swaraj party did not achieve any significant success. In Madras and the Punjab very few members of the party were elected but in the Councils of U. P., Assam and Bombay they were in considerable strength.

Page 224 3. The 39th session of the Indian National Congress was held at Belgaum on December 26 and 27, 1924, under the presidentship of Mahatma Gandhi. The relevant part of the resolution on Gandhi-Swarajist Pact is given below :

A—(*i*) The Congress hereby endorses the following agreement entered into between Mahatma Gandhi on the one hand and Deshbandhu C. R. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru, acting on behalf of the Swaraj Party, on the other :

Whereas although Swaraj is the goal of all the parties in India the country is divided into different groups seemingly working in opposite directions, and whereas such antagonistic activity retards the progress of the nation towards Swaraj, and whereas it is desirable to bring so far as possible all such parties within the Congress and on a common platform, and whereas the Congress herself is divided into two opposing sections resulting in harm to the country's cause, and whereas it is desirable to reunite these parties for the purpose of furthering the common cause, and whereas a policy of repression has been commenced in Bengal by the local government with the sanction of the Governor-General, and whereas in the opinion of the undersigned this repression is aimed in reality not at any party of violence but at the Swaraj Party in Bengal and therefore at constitutional and orderly activity, and whereas therefore it has become a matter of immediate necessity to invite and secure the co-operation of all parties for putting forth the united strength of the nation against the policy of repression, we the undersigned strongly recommend the following for adoption by all parties and eventually by the Congress at Belgaum :

"The Congress should suspend the programme of non-co-operation as the national programme except in so far as it relates to the refusal to use or wear cloth made out of India.

"The Congress should further resolve that the different classes of work of the Congress may be done as may be found necessary by different sections within the Congress and should resolve that the spread of hand-spinning and hand-weaving and all the antecedent processes and the spread of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar, and the promotion of unity between different communities, specially between the Hindus and the Muhammadans, and the removal of untouchability by the Hindus amongst them, should be carried on by all sections

within the Congress, and the work in connection with the Central and Provincial Legislatures should be carried on by the Swaraj Party on behalf of the Congress and as an integral part of the Congress organization, and for such work the Swaraj Party should make its own rules and administer its own funds.

"In as much as experience has shown that without universal spinning India cannot become self-supporting regarding her clothing requirements, and in as much as hand-spinning is the best and the most tangible method of establishing a visible and substantial bond between the masses and Congressmen and women, and in order to popularise hand-spinning and its products, the Congress should *repeal Article VIII of the Congress constitution and should substitute the* following therefor :

"No one shall be a member of any Congress Committee or organisation who is not of the age of 18 and who does not wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar at political and Congress functions, or while engaged in Congress business, and does not make a contribution of 2,000 yards of evenly spun yarn per month of his or her own spinning or, in case of illness, unwillingness, or any such cause, a like quantity of yarn spun by any other person."

Page 224 4. The Reforms Enquiry Committee was appointed in 1924 "(1) to enquire into the difficulties arising from, or defects inherent in the Government of India Act and rules thereunder in regard to the Central Government and the governments of Governor's provinces ; and (2) to investigate the feasibility and desirability of securing remedies for such difficulties or defects, consistent with the structure, policy and purpose of the Act, (a) by action taken under the Act and the Rules, or (b) by such amendments of the Act as appear necessary to rectify any administrative imperfections." Sir Alexander Muddiman was the Chairman of the Committee and the members were Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi, Maharajadhiraja Sir Bijay Chand Mahtab, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Sir Arthur Froome, Sir Sivaswami Iyer, Sir Henry Moncrieff Smith, Mr. M. A. Jinnah, and Dr. R. P. Paranjpye. The Committee could not come to any agreement and there were two Reports. The majority consisting of five members recommended only a few minor adjustments. The Minority Report signed by four, Sir T. B. Sapru, Sir Sivaswami Iyer, Mr. M. A. Jinnah and Dr. R. P. Paranjpye, held that Dyarchy had failed and should be replaced by Unitary and Responsible Provincial Governments.

Page 226 5. On 17 March 1924 the Nationalists, including Swarajists and the Independents, scored a signal victory over the Government in the Legislative Assembly by rejecting the Finance Bill. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's motion for the total rejection of the Bill was

adopted by 60 votes to 57.

Page 227 6. The 'Minority Report' of the Reforms Enquiry Committee was signed by Liberal leaders including Tej Bahadur Sapru, R. P. Paranjpye and Sivaswami Iyer. Srinivasa Sastri was the foremost leader of the Liberal party.

Page 233 7. Reference is to a speech by Lord Olivier, Secretary of State for India in the Labour Government, on 21 July 1924 in the House of Lords. He said : "...it must be assumed that the intention of the Government of India Act is that Transferred Departments are transferred for the purpose of being responsibly administered by a Council that would deal with the merits of the particular Votes on the grounds of public interest only, and not upon the grounds of some constitutional purpose which they had in mind in order to put pressure on Government of India. I do not know how far this agrees with the constitutional theory in this country that grievances must be redressed before supply is granted, which may be the view of Indian politicians. But having regard to the fact that we have a statutory Constitution established for certain definite objects it does, I think, speaking as a layman, appear to be, a perfectly reasonable construction of the Government of India Act."

Page 235 8. The All-Parties Conference met at Delhi on 23-24 January 1925 with the object of exploring the avenues of communal and political unity and preparing a scheme for Swaraj.

Page 235 9. Sir Alexander Muddiman, Home Member, made the following announcement in the Council of State on 2 March 1925, when speaking on a resolution regarding recruitment of Muslim candidates for the public services moved by Saiyid Raza Ali. "It gives me pleasure, however, to be able to inform the House that we do contemplate as regards the All-India Services an extension of the present arrangement for securing representation for minority communities......At present we reserve one-third of the vacancies in that service (I. C. S.) which will be filled by direct recruitment in India to redress these inequalities. We propose in the future to reserve one-third of the whole of the direct Indian recruitment. We shall, as in the past, in exercising these powers of appointment, first observe the results of the competitive examination. If these results are satisfactory, we shall be in no difficulty. If they are unsatisfactory we shall then resort to the process of nomination...... If we cannot obtain candidates with adequate qualifications we shall not appoint them." In other all-India services too the principle of one-third reservation for minorities was laid down.

The Resolution was withdrawn after Muddiman's statement.

Page 236 10. A group of prominent Indian liberals, including Annie Besant, V. Srinivasa Sastri, Munshi Ishwar Saran, Rangachariar and Sir Ali Imam, who were in England in June 1924, submitted a

memorandum to the India Office emphasizing India's right to frame her own constitution in the same manner as done by Australia and other self-governing dominions. They also warned the British Government of the dangers of carrying out the 'step by step' theory. They added that the safety of the connection between India and Britain "depended on the establishment of Dominion Home Rule in India as quickly as possible and that unless that was done the constitutional party would be destroyed and the people driven to despair." The memorandum was presented after Lord Olivier's speech at Oxford repudiating India's right to self-determination.

20

Page 243 1. Lajpat Rai assumed the presidentship of the Hindu Mahasabha on 11 April 1925 at its annual session held at Calcutta.

Page 251 2. An organization of orthodox Hindus opposed to social reform.

21

Page 258 1. Lajpat Rai was arrested and deported to Burma on 9 May 1907.

Page 258 2. This refers to Lajpat Rai's arrest on 3 December 1921 for attending a meeting of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee. See above p. 474.

Page 258 3. After the end of the First World War when Lajpat Rai wanted to return to India from the United States of America the British authorities refused to grant him the necessary passport for practically the whole of 1919.

Page 261 4. Ordinance No. I of 1924 issued on 25 October 1924, to supplement ordinary criminal law in Bengal.

Page 262 5. Sir Alexander Muddiman, Home Member, had said in his speech that in law there was no distinction between political and other offences, except possibly in English law in regard to seditious offences. He had also pointed out that the Indian Penal Code did not pay regard to the motives of the offender. For full text of the speech see *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1926, Vol. VII, Part I, pp. 290-97.

Page 263 6. Subhas Chandra Bose was arrested under the Bengal Ordinance on 25 October 1924 along with about fifty prominent leaders of Bengal without any formal charges having been made against them. Mr. Bose and other political prisoners were sent to Burma for detention on 29 January 1925. The detenues resorted to hunger-strike on 20 February 1925 as a protest against the Government's refusal to allow them to celebrate religious festivals.

Page 265 7. This meeting of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee was held at Lahore on 3 December, 1921 under full knowledge of the fact that the district of Lahore was a 'proclaimed' area under the Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act of 1911. The District Magistrate regarded the meeting as illegal and arrested Lala Lajpat Rai, Pandit K. Santa-

nam, Dr Gopi Chand Bhargava and Malik Lal Khan and forcibly dispersed the meeting. After a trial Lajpat Rai was sentenced on 7 January 1922, to six months and the other accused were also sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment and fine. Later on the Punjab Government remitted the sentences on the ground that the meeting of the Provincial Congress Committee did not legally constitute a 'public meeting'.

Page 267 8. Lord Olivier, Secretary of State for India in the Labour Government of 1924

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Page 270 1. Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra was the Member for Industries and Labour in the Government of India.

Page 272 2. In the exchange crisis of 1907-08 sterling bills were first sold in India on 26 March 1908 and continued to be sold till 11 September. A sum of £ 8,058,000 was withdrawn during this period from the Gold Standard Reserve to meet the bills

Page 272 3. H. Calvert, Nominated Member from the Punjab. For text of his speech see *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1926, Vol. VII, Part I, pp. 365-67.

Page 273 4. The Imperial Bank of India which came into existence in 1921 by the amalgamation of the Presidency Banks.

Page 276 5. The Royal Commission on Agriculture was apppointed on 31 March 1926 under the chairmanship of the Marquess of Linlithgo, with the object of "generally to examine and report on the present conditions of agriculture and rural economy in British India and to make recommendations for the improvement of agriculture and the promotion of the welfare and prosperity of the rural population." The Commission's report was submitted to the Government of India on 14 April 1928

23

Page 277 1. Reference is to the following Resolution moved in the Legislative Assembly by Mr. N. M. Joshi on 1 March 1921 :

"This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council that he should take steps necessary to introduce, at an early date, in the Indian Legislature, such legislation as may be necessary for the registration of trade unions and for the protection of trade unionists and trade union officials from civil and criminal liability for *bona fide* trade union activities".

This Resolution was amended to the following effect and passed:

"This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council that he should take steps to introduce as soon as practicable in the Indian Legislature such legislation as may be necessary for the registration of trade unions."

Page 280 2. The clauses were as given below :

17 (1) No suit or other legal proceedings shall be maintainable in any Civil Court against any registered Trade Union or any officer or member thereof in respect of any act done in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute to which a member of the Trade Union is a party on the ground only that such act induces some other person to break a contract of employment, or that it is in interference with the trade, business or employment of some other person or with the right of some other person to dispose of his capital or of his labour as he wills.

(2) No suit or other legal proceedings shall be maintainable in any Civil Court against a registered Trade Union in respect of any act done in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute acting on behalf of the Trade Union, if it is proved that such person acted without the knowledge of, or contrary to express instructions given by the executive of the Trade Union and that the executive has repudiated such act at the earliest opportunity and by all reasonable means and with reasonable publicity.

18. Notwithstanding anything contained i any other law for the time being in force, an agreement between the members of a registered Trade Union shall not be void or voidable merely by reason of the fact that any of the objects of the agreement are in restraint of trade:

Provided that nothing in this section shall enable any Civil Court to entertain any legal proceeding instituted for the express purpose of enforcing or recovering damages for the breach of any agreement concerning the conditions on which any member of a Trade Union shall or shall not sell their goods, transact business, work, employ or be employed.

19. The account books of a registered Trade Union and the list of members thereof shall be open at all reasonable time to inspection by an officer or member of the Trade Union.

Page 280 3. W. S J. Wilson of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, nominated non-official member, representing European business interests.

Page 284 4. The Contempt of Courts Bill was passed on 8 February 1926.

24

Page 287 1. Mr. J T. Donovan, nominated official from Bengal. For full text of his speech see *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1926, Vol. VII, part II pp. 1108-18.

Page 287 2. The reference is to Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Lieutenant-Governor, Punjab, 1913-19.

Page 288 3. In 1905-6 Surendranath Banerjea took a leading part in the agitation against the Partition of Bengal and in 1907 denounced the deportation of Lajpat Rai. Nine Bengali leaders were deported in

December 1909 under Regulation III of 1818. *See also* Vol. 1, p. 405.

Page 289 4. Surendranath Banerjea was appointed Minister for Local-self-Government and Public Health in the Government of Bengal in 1921 after his election as a member of the Provincial Legislative Council under the Reform Scheme.

Page 289 5. Banerjea was defeated in the elections of 1923 to the Bengal Legislative Council by a young Swarajist candidate, Bidhan Chandra Roy, till then almost unknown in Bengal politics.

Page 289 6. C. R. Das.

Page 289 7. The Ordinance(No. I of 1924) issued on 25 October 1924.

Page 291 8 See above note on Repressive Laws Committee, pp. 469-70.

Page 294 9. Mr. J. T. Donovan had quoted a speech of Sir Abdul Rahim in which he said, "We Muslims cannot regard boys or men suffering from hysteria as serious politicians, and the fact is significant that not a single Muslim has joined them."

Page 295 10. Indian Sedition Committee of 1917-18 which was presided over by Mr. Justice S. A. T. Rowlatt.

25

Page 301 1. *Satyarth Prakash* (Light of Truth) by Swami Dayanand, first published in 1875, contains the basic teachings of the founder of the Arya Samaj.

Page 302 2. The session of the Hindu Mahasabha was held at Delhi on 13-15 March 1926 under the presidentship of Raja Narendra Nath.

26

Page 311 1. In July 1925 a comprehensive Bill, the Areas Reservation and Immigration and Registration (Further Provision) Bill, was introduced in the Union Assembly of South Africa. The Government of India made a strong protest against the provisions of this Bill and towards the end of November 1925 sent an official deputation to South Africa. The South African Government agreed to postpone the consideration of the Bill. After prolonged negotiations an agreement was reached on 21 February 1927 and it was decided not to proceed with the Bill.

Page 311 2. The South African Colour Bar Bill (Mines and Works Amendment Bill) which restricted the sphere of labour of natives and other coloured persons in respect of certain professions was introduced by General Hartzog's Government, which came into power in 1924. It was rejected by the Senate in 1925. After it was re-introduced the Bill was again rejected by the Senate on 17 March 1926. The Bill was finally passed in May 1926 by a joint session of the two houses of the South African Legislature as provided by the South African Act of 1909.

Page 312 3. Sir Arthur Froome, a nominee of the European Chambers of Commerce, was the Employers' delegate from India for the 1926 meeting of the International Labour Conference.

Page 312 4. N. M. Joshi was the Workers delegate at the International Labour Conference held at Geneva in May 1925.

27

Page 316 1. Lajpat Rai resigned from the Swaraj Party on 24 August 1926.

Page 316 2. Lajpat Rai visited England in 1924 after the Labour Government came to power.

Page 316 3. The pact was concluded in 1923 by C. R. Das with Muslim leaders of Bengal. See above page 480 for provisions of the pact.

Page 317 4. C. R. Das died on 16 June 1925.

Page 319 5. Reference is to the speech of C. R. Das delivered on 2 May 1925, as President of the Bengal Conference held at Faridpur. In this speech he defended the ideal of Dominion Status as against Complete Independence. He also made an offer of co-operation with the Government on the following conditions :

"In the first place, the Government should divest itself of its wide discretionary power of constraint, and follow it up by proclaiming a general amnesty of all political prisoners. In the next place the Government should guarantee to us the fullest recognition of our right to the establishment of Swaraj within the Commonwealth in the near future and that in the meantime till Swaraj comes, a sure and sufficient foundation of such Swaraj should be laid at once."

For full text of the speech see *Deshbandhu Chittranjan Das* by Hemendranath Das Gupta (New Delhi, 1964), pp.208-28.

28

Page 323 1. M. Keane, nominated official member from the United Provinces.

Page 323 2. The question of release of political prisoners was discussed by the Legislative Assembly on 26 January 1926 when Maulvi Mohammad Shafee's resolution on the subject was considered. See above footnote on pp. 258-59.

Page 324 3. Reference is to the speech of Sir Alexander Muddiman on 26 January 1926 in the Legislative Assembly.

29

Page 331 1. The Act of 1919 had vested the Governor-General with the power of certifying any demands rejected by the Legislative Assembly. Frequent use was made by him of this power after the entry of the Swarajists into the Legislature.

Page 332 2. For D. E. Wacha's views on Indian Railway Finance see *Speeches and Writings of Sir Dinshaw Edulji Wacha* (G. A. Natesan, Madras) pp. 206-72.

Page 334 3. Reference is to the speech of Sir Charles Innes, Member for Commerce and Railways, on 22 February 1927, during the general discussion on the Railway Budget. For text of his speech see *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1927, Vol. II, pp. 1183-1190.

Page 334 4. For text of the speech of T. Prakasam (East Godavari and West Godavari *cum* Kistna, Non-Muhammadan, Rural) see *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1927, Vol. II, pp. 1175-78.

Page 335 5. Varahgiri Venkata Jogiah represented Ganjam *cum* Vizagapatam, Non-Muhammadan Rural constituency. For the text of his speech see *Legislative Assembly* Debates, 1927, Vol. II, pp. 1149-51.

Page 336 6. Purshsotamdas Thakurdas represented Indian Merchants Chamber in the Legislative Assembly. For the text of his speech see *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1927, Vol II, pp. 1226-29.

30

Pade 340 1. The reference is to J. Crerar's speech in the Legislative Assembly on 23 August 1927. For full text of the speech see *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1927, Vol. IV, pp. 3230-37.

Page 340 2. The issue was first considered on 15 February 1927

Page 341 3. For a note on Repressive Laws Committee see above pp. 469-70.

Page 341 4. Clause 2 was "Sub-clause (b) of clause (2) of Section 15 of the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act of, 1908 is hereby repealed". This sub-class conferred power on the Governor-General in Council, to declare associations unlawful.

Page 343 5. Shortly after Gladstone had initiated a policy of conciliation with the Irish in the spring of 1882 and released Parnell (2 May) Lord Frederick Cavendish, the new Chief Secretary of Ireland and his Under Secretary, Burke, were stabbed to death on 6 May 1882 in the Phoenix Park of Dublin. The murders were committed by a group known as the 'Invincibles'.

Page 345 6. The Congress and Khilafat Volunteer Organizations were declared unlawful by the Government on 18 November 1921 following a successful hartal on 17 November 1921, the day the Prince of Wales landed in Bombay, and serious disorders which occurred in the city.

Page 347 7. See above note on Congress Committee meeting on page 484-85.

Page 348 8. See above note number 4 of page 341.

Page 350 9. This case was one of the biggest conspiracy cases in India. On August 9, 1925 a passenger train was stopped by some persons and looted within ten miles of Lucknow railway station. Enquiry into this daring dacoity revealed to the police the existence of a widespread revolutionary organisation in the United Provinces with an off-shoot in the Central Provinces and working in concert with the main organisation in Bengal. The police sent up before Mr. Syed Ainuddin, Special

Magistrate, 26 persons on a charge of conspiracy to wage war against the King, a conspiracy to commit dacoity and murder. Of the 26 persons, three remained absconding and two turned approvers. The Special Magistrate committed all the remaining persons to the Sessions.

The judgement in the case was delivered by Mr. A. H. De B. Hamilton, Special Judge, Lucknow, on 6 April 1927. Of the 22 accused before the Court three were sentenced to be hanged, one was transported for life, one got 14 years rigorous imprisonment, five got 10 years each, two seven years each, six sentenced to 5 years rigorous imprisonment and two were acquitted.

Page 350 10. The case known as the Bolshevik Conspiracy Trial was decided by the Sessions Judge in Kanpur on 20 May 1924. In this case four persons were convicted for conspiring 'to wage a war against the King' and to spread Bolshevism in India. The Judge sentenced the four accused (Nalini Bhushan Dasgupta, Shaukat Usmani, Muzaffar Ahmed and S. A. Dange) to four years rigorous imprisonment each. The case aroused much interest not only in India but also in Britain and abroad as it was the first definite attempt of the authorities to stop the spread of socialism in India.

31

Page 353 1. The speech delivered by H. G. Cocke (Bombay, European) in the Legislative Assembly on 31 August 1927. For text of the speech see *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1927, Vol. IV, pp. 3759-61.

Page 353 2. For text of the speech of Alexander Murray (Associated Chambers of Commerce, Nominated Non-official) on 30 August 1927, see *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1927, Vol. IV, pp. 3681-91.

Page 353 3. For the text of the speech of Victor Sassoon (Bombay Millowners' Association, Indian Commerce) delivered on 29 August 1927, see *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1927, Vol. IV, pp. 3581-82.

Page 354 4. Vidya Sagar Pandya represented Madras Indian Commerce. For the text of his speech on 30 August 1926 see *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1927, Vol. IV, pp. 3649-57.

Page 355 5. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (Allahabad and Jhansi Divisions Non-Muhammadan Rural) spoke on the subject on 29 August 1927. For the text of his speeeh see *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1927, Vol. IV, pp. 3566-81.

Page 355 6. For the text of the speech of Purshotamdas Thakurdas (Indian Merchants' Chamber, Indian Commerce) delivered on 31 August 1927, see *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1927, Vol. IV, pp 3738-3750.

Page 356 7. Sir John W. A. Bell in his minute of dissent to the Report of the Joint Committee on the Gold Standard and Reserve Bank of India Bill expressed the view that it would be better to give effect to

the recommendation of the Currency Commission for the establishment of the Reserve Bank by transferring the Currency Department of the Government of India to the Imperial Bank and allowing that institution to carry out the functions of the Reserve Bank for some years.

Page 357 8. The Joint Committee on the Bill in its Report, presented to the Central Legislative Assembly on 18 August 1927, recommended the constitution of a Board of Directors of the proposed Reserve Bank with a majority of Indian elected members. The Committee also recommended the deletion in the original bill of the clause prohibiting the members of the Indian or Provincial legislatures from being nominated or elected as Directors of the Bank.

Page 359 9. N. C. Kelkar (Bombay Central Division, Non-Muhammadan Rural) spoke on the subject on 31 August 1927. For text of his speech see *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1927, Vol. IV, pp. 3753-57.

32.

Page 360 1. D. V. Belvi (Bombay Southern Division, Non-Muhammadan Rural) had given notice of an amendment that the Bill be circulated for eliciting public opinion thereon. For text of his speech see *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1927, Vol. IV, pp. 3929-30.

Page 360 2. The case was started by the Punjab Government under Section 153-A, I. P. C. in 1924 and the accused Mahashe Rajpal, an Arya Samajist publisher of Lahore, was charged for exciting hatred between Hindus and Muhammadans. The publication 'Rangila Rasul', the subject of the case, was a small brochure in Urdu written anonymously and contained attacks on the life of the Prophet of Islam. The accused was found guilty by the trial magistrate and sentenced to ten months' rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 1,000. The Sessions judge upheld the conviction on appeal but reduced the sentence. On 4 May 1927 the Punjab High Court quashed the conviction and held that Section 153-A was not applicable in the case.

Mahashe Rajpal was assassinated on 26 September 1927 by a Muslim fanatic named Khuda Baksh.

Page 361 3. Literally the "prophet of the nineteenth century'. The publication contained an attack on Swami Dayanand, the founder of the Arya Samaj.

Page 362 4. For text of the speech of Abdul Haye (East Punjab Muhammadan) see *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1927, Vol. IV, pp. 3927-29.

33

Page 364 1. The decision to constitute the Indian Statutory Commission for examining the question of constitutional reforms, under the chairmanship of Sir John Simon, was announced by the British

Prime Minister on 8 November 1927. The Commission did not include any Indian member and this caused tremendous resentment in India and led to its boycott by the Indian National Congress and other political parties in the country.

Page 364 2. The reference is to the speech of Earl of Birkenhead, Secretary of State for India, on 24 November 1927 in the House of Lords.

Page 364 3. The speech delivered by the Earl of Winterton, Under Secretary of State for India, while moving the resolution on the Statutory Commission in the House of Commons on 25 November 1927.

Page 364 4. In his speech in the House of Commons, on 25 November 1927, Ramsay Macdonald, the Leader of the Labour Opposition, supported the resolution regarding the constitution of the Statutory Commission. He, however, made a suggestion that the procedure of the Commission be made more acceptable to the Indian people.

Page 365 5. Kaiser William II, 1888-1918.

Page 368 6. J. Ramsay Macdonald resigned from the chairmanship of the British Labour Party when the majority of the Parliamentary Party opposed his proposal to read in the House of Commons the resolution of the Party's Executive issued on 5 August 1914, the day after Britain's entry into the war. The resolution said that the Labour's present duty was "to secure peace at the earliest possible moment on such conditions as will provide the best opportunities for the re-establishment of amicable feelings between the workers of Europe."

Page 369 7. George Lansbury and Josiah Clement Wedgwood who held liberal views regarding Indian independence. For a note on Lansbury see *Writings and Speeches*, Vol. 1, p. 410. For Wedgwood see above page. 461.

Page 370 8. Stanley Baldwin who became the Prime Minister of Britain on 4 November 1924 after the resignation of Ramsay Macdonald's Labour Ministry.

Page 371 9. During the period of the Labour Government in 1924 a policy of repression was followed in Bengal. To deal with political agitation in the Province, Bengal Ordinance was issued and Subhas Chandra Bose and fifty other prominent leaders were arrested and detained in Burma.

Page 372 10. The Commission on Indian Currency and Exchange, appointed in August 1925 under the chairmanship of Hilton Young. The Commission's report which has been described as "epoch-making" was submitted in 1926. The Currency Commission recommended the adoption by India of the gold bullion standard and the setting up of a Reserve Bank to control currency and credit in the country.

Page 372 11. See above page 482 for a note on the Muddiman Committee.

Page 374 12. Raja Narendra Nath and Professor Gulshan Rai, Hindu leaders of the Punjab, were in favour of co-operation with the Statutory

Commission to ensure protection of rights of the Hindu community. Raja Narendra Nath wrote for the Commission a "Memorandum on rights claimed by Hindu minority in North-West India." Raja Narendra Nath was also a member of the Punjab Auxiliary Committee for the Simon Commission.

Page 376 13. The Bill to amend the Criminal Procedure Code was introduced on 12 February 1926. It made provision for the restoration to magistrates of the discretionary power to award rigorous instead of simple imprisonment to persons of known criminal character who were unable to provide adequate sureties. Sir A. Muddiman in moving the Bill for consideration described it of utmost importance. The opposition thought that the clauses in question were being used by the Government for political purposes. The Bill was passed by the Legislative Assembly on 15 February 1926 by 56 to 42 votes.

Page 377 14. Mr. J. A. Taisee of Messrs Jas Finlay and Company of Calcutta.

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Page 378 1. The Statutory Commission consisted of seven members : Sir John Simon, Lord Burnham. Lord Strathcona, Colonel Lane-Fox, Mr. Edward Cadogan, Mr. Vernon Hartshorn and Mr. C. R. Attlee. The Chairman, Sir John Simon, was a Liberal ; there were two Labour members and four Conservatives. It was later on laid down that the members of the Commission were to co-operate with the elected members of Indian Legislatures. The Indian Legislative Assembly boycotted the Commission, but partial co-operation was received from the Provincial Legislative Councils. The Report of the Commission was issued in May 1930.

Page 380 2. The reference is to the speech of Lord Birkenhead in the House of Lords on 24 November 1927 when moving the resolution on the Statutory Commission.

Page 382 3. Earl of Birkenhead (1872-1930) had a brilliant academic career at Oxford, passing Final Examination of Honours School in Jurisprudence with a first class in 1898. A brilliant lawyer, he was Attorney General, 1915-19. Birkenhead was Secretary of State for India from 1924 to 1928.

Page 383 4. J. Coatman was Director of Information, Government of India.

Page 383 5. Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah of Madras was a nominated Member of the Legislative Assembly to represent the depressed classes.

Page 384 6. Reference is to the following remarks in Lord Birkenhead's speech in the House of Lords on 24 November 1927 moving the resolution on the Statutory Commission :

"I was reading a speech reported in the *Pioneer* (mail edition) a few days ago by a most distinguished member of the Legislative Assembly, who is himself a Hindu of high position and ability. It

was the speech of Mr. Goswami made at the All India Congress Committee, a meeting not altogether favourable to His Majesty's Government or the present Secretary of State. He said that he did not know if there were any Mahomedan organisations in the country which represented the opinion of the Mahomedans, but so far as his community was concerned he was certain that there was no such organisation which could speak in the name of the Hindu community. We know it therefore from a very prominent member of the Hindu community that in his judgement there is no one in all India who can speak effectively in the name of the Hindu community."

Page 385 7. The report of the Mesopotamia Commission which was appointed in 1917 after the disaster at Kut, under the chairmanship of Lord George Hamilton, was very damaging in regard to the efficiency of the Government of India.

Page 385 8. Mr. Montagu said this in his speech in the House of Commons delivered on 12 July 1917 when discussing the Report of the Mesopotamia Commission. For full text of his speech see *Official Report, Fifth Series, Parliament Debates* (*Commons*), Vol. 95, pp. 2199-2210.

Page 386 9. Two Rowlatt Bills were introduced in the Imperial Legislative Council and one of these was passed on 18 March 1919 and placed on the Statute-book on 21 March as the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act, 1919.

Page 386 10. Mr. Jinnah's letter of protest to the Governor-General was dated 28 March 1919.

Page 387 11. There was considerable opposition in the Legislative Assembly to the Gold Standard and Reserve Bank of India Bill (1927). Sir Basil Blackett, Finance Member, announced on 8 September 1927 the Government's decision not to proceed with the Bill in view of its failure to arrive at a conclusion acceptable to the Assembly.

Page 387 12. The Finance Bill was rejected by the Legislative Assembly in March 1924. The Salt Tax was certified by the Governor-General on 31 March 1924.

Page 387 13. The motion for introduction of the Indian States (Protection against Disaffection) Bill, 1922, was defeated in the Central Legislative Assembly on 23 September 1922. The measure was certified by the Governor-General under Section 67B of the Government of India Act, 1919 and placed on the Statue-book on 12 March 1923. The object of the Act was to "prevent the dissemination by means of books, newspapers and other documents of matter calculated to bring into hatred or contempt or to excite disaffection against Princes or Chiefs of States in India or Governments or administrations established in such States".

Page 387 14. The Ratio Bill fixing the exchange rate of Rupee at 1 sh. 6d. was

passed by the Legislative Assembly by a majority of three votes only in 1927.

Page 387 **15.** Hilton Young Commission on Currency and Exchange, 1925-26.

Page 387 **16.** The Indian Sandhurst Committee, generally known as the Skeen Committee, appointed by the Government of India in June 1925 to explore the possibility of establishing a Military College in India for improving the supply of Indian candidates for the King's Commission both in numbers and quality.

Page 387 **17.** Royal Commission on Public Services under the presidentship of Viscount Lee. The Commission submitted its report on 27 March 1924. Its major recommendations were the increase in the Indian recruitment to the Indian Civil Service by 50 per cent. and the Indian Police Service by 40 per cent. It also recommended a considerable enhancement in the emoluments of European Civil Servants in India.

Page 388 **18.** Sir William Joynson-Hicks was Secretary of State for Home Affairs, 1924-29.

Page 388 **19.** Sir George M. Chesney's *India Under Experiment* was published in 1918.

Page 389 **20.** Various estimates of deaths caused by influenza in India during 1918-19 had been made. The total mortality, according to the average of calculation, was between twelve and thirteen millions.

Page 393 **21.** For a note on Muddiman Committee see above p. 482.

Page 393 **22.** For full text of the speech of Dr. A. Suhrawardy (Burdwan and Presidency Divisions, Muhammadan Rural) delivered on 18 February 1928 see *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1928, Vol. I, pp. 470-75.

Page 394 **23.** For text of the speech of Rev. J. C. Chatterjee (Nominated Indian Christian) see *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1928, Vol. I, pp. 493-96.

Page 397 **24.** Katherine Mayo's *Mother India* was first published in 1927. It was generally believed that Miss Mayo received assistance from Anglo-Indian officials and non-officials in collecting data for her book.

35

Page 399 **1.** Reference is to the debate in the Legislative Assembly on 16 February 1926 on a Resolution by Maulvi Sayad Murtuza Sahib Bahadur (South Madras Muhammadan). The Resolution read :

"This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council that he be pleased to extend to the North-West Frontier Province the provisions of the Government of India Act which relate to Legislative Councils and the appointment of Ministers etc. with protection to the minorities".

Page 399 **2.** All-Parties Conference met at Delhi from 12 to 22 Feburary 1928, in accordance with the decision of the Madras session of the Indian

National Congress held in December 1927. No agreement between Hindus and Muslims was reached.

Page 399 3. For text of the speech of Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Khan (Patna and Chota Nagpur *cum* Orissa, Muhammadan) on 14 March 1928 see *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1928, Vol. I, pp. 1443-45.

Page 400 4. The reference is to the enquiry conducted by a Committee under the chairmanship of Sir Denys Bray, Secretary, Foreign Department of the Government of India, in 1924, regarding the introduction of reforms in the North-West Frontier Province. No action was taken by the Government on the Report of the Committee.

Page 401 5. Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum was a nominated non-official Member of the Legislative Assembly from the North-West Frontier Province.

Page 401 6. Dr. B. S. Moonje, the well-known Responsivist and Hindu Mahasabha leader, represented Nagpur Division non-Muhammadan constituency. He was President of the Hindu Mahasabha annual session held at Patna in 1927.

36

Page 406 1. Lieutenant-Colonel Henry A. J. Gidney was a nominated Anglo-Indian Member of the Legislative Assembly.

Page 407 2. Lord Sinha (Satyendra Prasanna Sinha) the eminent Moderate leader was Law Member of the Governor-General's Council in 1909-10. He presided over the 30th session of the Indian National Congress held at Bombay in 1915. In 1919 he was appointed Under Secretary for India by Mr. Montagu.

Page 408 3. Mr. J. Coatman was Director of Public Information.

Page 408 4. Reference is to the debate in the Central Legislative Assembly on 23 February 1928 on a Resolution moved by Mr. M. R. Jayakar which read :

"This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council to issue directions to all Local Governments to provide special facilities for the education of the untouchables and other depressed classes and also opening all public services to them, specially the Police."

Lala Lajpat Rai moved the following amendment :

"That at the end of the Resolution the following be added :

'And this Assembly further recommends to the Governor-General in Council to sanction one crore of rupees for the education of the depressed classes from the central funds and to issue orders that all wells that are not private, all streets and roads that are public, and all institutions which are financed or managed partly or wholly from public funds be opened to the depressed classes and that a special list be made of untouchables, and others who are not untouchables but are at present included in the depressed classes in

Government records".

The amendment was lost by 25 votes to 47. For full text of Lajpat Rai's speech see *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1928, Vol. I, pp. 693-98.

Page 409 5. Rao Bahadur M.C. Rajah, nominated non-official Member representing the depressed classes.

Page 413 6. Mian Muhammad Shah Nawaz elected from the West Central Punjab Muhammadan constituency.

38

Page 424 1. Har Dayal was arrested in March 1914 in San Francisco on a complaint by the U.S. Immigration authorities. He was defended by a lawyer and released on bail.

Page 425 2. A trade agreement was concluded on 8 August 1924 between the first Labour Government of Britain and the Soviet Government. After the fall of the Labour Government the right wing of the Conservative Party advocated the reversal of the Russian policy of the Labour Government. The trade agreement was terminated following a police search on 12 May 1927 of the premises in London shared by the Russian trade delegation and a British firm trading with Russia. See Carl F. Brand, *The British Labour Party*, pp. 122-23.

Page 426 3. Mr. J. Coatman.

Page 426 4. George Allison was sent to India by the leaders of British Bolshevism in 1926 to organise the Communist Party and the Workers and Peasants Party in India. He arrived in Bombay on 30 April 1926. Allison was arrested by the Police in January 1927 when organizing the Bengal Workers and Peasants Party. He was awarded a sentence of 18 months and deported to England in March. See David N. Druhe, *Soviet Russia and Indian Commnuism* (New York, 1959) pp. 82, 92, 102.

Page 426 5. Philip Spratt, a Cambridge graduate, came to India in December 1926 on behalf of the Labour Research Department, London. He was believed to have exercised powerful influence in organising the Workers and Peasants Party.

Page 429 6. Kellogg-Briand Anti-War Pact was signed at Paris on 27 August 1928 by the United States of America, France and fourteen other countries.

Page 430 7. Dr. Harold Hart Mann, an agricultural expert and well-known writer on Indian agriculture and tea cultivation, was Director of Agriculture, Bombay Presidency, 1918-20 and 1921-27. The quotation is from an interview given on his retirement in 1927 to a representative of the *Times of India.*

Page 433 8. N. M. Joshi, Indian labour leader and nominated Member of the Legislative Assembly. In 1928 a remittance of about Rupees twenty

thousand was received by him from the Central Committee of the Russian Textile Union to support the strike of the Bombay Textile Workers. See David N. Druhe, *Soviet Russia and Indian Communism* (New York, 1959) p. 94.

Page 433 9. *The History of Trade Unionism* by Sidney and Beatrice Webb, first published in May 1894. A new edition of this important work came out in February 1920.

Page 437 10. The reference is to the notices of externment served on two Indian revolutionaries, H. L. Gupta and Rash Behari Bose. See Lajpat Rai, *Autobiographical Writings*, p. 211.

40

Pagc 443 1. Bhai Parmanand was opposed to the recommendations of the Nehru Report about communal representation as he considered those harmful to the interests of the Hindu community.

Page 446 2. The Aga Khan (1877-1957) led the Muslim deputation to Lord Minto in 1906 and was known for his pro-British attitude. In 1918 he supported Sir Muhammad Shafi in co-operating with the Simon Commission and opposing the Nehru Report.

Page 446 3. Sir Muhammad Shafi was in favour of co-operation with the Simon Commission. When Mr. Jinnah took a firm stand in the Muslim League in regard to the Simon Commission, Muhammad Shafi set up a separate Muslim League which met at Lahore in December 1927. This League stood for co-operation.

Page 450 4. Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar and Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah, the two leaders of the depressed classes. Dr. Ambedkar was a member of the Bombay Provincial Committee elected by the Legislative Council to work with the Simon Commission. He wanted the depressed classes to be treated as a minority separate from Hindus. Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah was a member of the Central Committee appointed by the Government of India to work with the Simon Commission. Both of them gave evidence before the Simon Commission.

Page 451 5. The Adi Hindu Movement was a separatist movement of the depressed classes in Madras, demanding nominations for the community in the legislature.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

MOKHTAR AHMAD ANSARI. Born about 1880; educated at Banaras and Hyderabad : graduated from Nizam College; awarded the Nizam Scholarship for post-graduate studies, 1902 ; went to England to study medicine ; M.D. and Ph.D. (Edinburgh), 1905; went to London, 1906; worked in the Charing Cross Hospital and the Lock Hospital for women and children; returned to India 1909; started practice in Delhi, 1910; interested in Khilafat, organised the Red Crescent Mission and went with an ambulance to Turkey during the Turko-Italian war, 1911-12· collaborated in organising the Anjuman-i-Eanat-i-Nazar-Bandan Islam, 1915; associated with the Congress-League Pact, Lucknow, 1916; chairman of the Reception Committee of the Muslim League session, Lahore, 1918; gave evidence before the Rowlatt Committee, 1918; one of the Secretaries of the All-India Congress Committee, 1919; President of the Muslim League session, Nagpur, 1920; participated in the Non-co-operation and Khilafat movement, 1921-22; member Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee appointed by the Congress, 1922; opposed to Council entry; drafted Indian National Pact with Lajpat Rai, 1923; President Indian National Congress, Madras session, 1927; President All-Parties Conference, 1928; Member, A.I.C.C., 1928-34, formed the Nationalist Muslim Party, 1928; took prominent part in the civil disobedience movement, 1930-32; was imprisoned twice; joined the all-India Congress Socialist Party and was a member of its executive, 1934-36 ; died on 10 May 1936.

ABUL KALAM AZAD. Born in Mecca in 1888 of an old family of Delhi ; came to India with the family, 1890 ; educated privately and started as pupil teacher when only 14 ; toured Iraq, Syria and Egypt, 1908 ; started Al Hilal Press and *Al Hilal* journal at Calcutta, June, 1912 ; the journal suppressed in 1914 and Azad was externed from Calcutta, Punjab, Bombay and U. P., 1916 ; interned in Ranchi till 31 December 1919 ; participated in the Non-co-operation and Khilafat movements and jailed ; released on 1 January 1923 ; President of the special Congress session, Delhi, 1923, also from 1939 to 46; participated in the Unity Conference, 1924 and worked for Hindu-Muslim accord; served several terms of imprisonment, 11 years in all ; opposed the mildness of Gandhi's programme of individual civil disobedience in the Congress Working Committee, 1940 ; conducted talks with Sir Stafford Cripps on behalf of the Congress, 1942 ; was the sole spokesman of the Congress at the Simla Conference, 1945 ; conducted negotiations with the Cabinet Mission, 1946 ; Education Minister, Interim Government, January-August, 1947 ; Minister of Education, Government of India, 1947 to his death ; Deputy Leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party from February 1951 onward ; renowned oriental scholar and author; died 22 February 1958.

CHITTARANJAN DAS. Born at Calcutta on 5 November 1870; educated at Presidency College, Calcutta, graduated in 1890; went to England, 1890; called to the Bar, 1893; enrolled as advocate, Calcutta High Court, 1893; wrote Bengali poems and generally interested in literature; published *Malancha*, 1895, *Mala*, 1904, *Sagar Sangeet*, 1910; promoted Swadeshi Mandli, 1904; drafted the main resolution of the Bengal Provincial Conference at Barisal, 1906; defended Brahma Bandho Upadhyaya, editor of the *Sandhya* and B. C. Pal, 1907; defended Arabinda Ghosh in the Alipore Bomb Case, 1909; appeared as defence counsel in the Delhi Conspiracy Case, 1914; one of the founders and member of the Editorial Board of the *Bande-Mataram*; founder and Editor-in-chief of *Forward*, the Swaraj Party organ; also conducted a Bengali monthly *Narayana*; President Bengal Provincial Conference, Calcutta, 1917; member of the Congress Sub-committee on the Punjab disturbances, 1919; gave up legal practice during the Non-co-operation movement and organized Congress Volunteer Corps; arrested and sentenced to six months imprisonment, 1921; President-elect of the Ahmedabad Congress, 1921; President of the Gaya Congress, 1922; opposed boycott of Councils and founded the Swaraj Party in collaboration with Motilal Nehru, 1923; elected first Mayor of Calcutta Corporation, 1924; Leader of the Swaraj Party in the Bengal Legislative Assembly, 1924; President of the Bengal Provincial Conference, Faridpur, 1925; died on 16 June 1925.

FAZL-I-HUSAIN. Born at Peshawar on 14 June 1877; educated at Abbotabad, Peshawar and Gurdaspur, matriculated in 1893 and graduated in 1897; failed to qualify for I. C. S.; signed the roll of Barristers of the High Court in the King's Bench Division, 1901; organised the International Muslim Association of Cambridge University, 1901; started legal practice at Peshawar, later shifted to Sialkot, 1901; assisted in establishing Anjuman-i-Himayat-i Islam at Sialkot and in founding Madrassa-tul-Quran for education of orphans, 1903; moved to Lahore, 1905; acted as defence counsel on behalf of Bhai Parmanand in 1909 and again in the Delhi-Lahore Conspiracy Case, 1914; collaborated in founding the 'Jahangir Club', 1915: Member, Punjab Legislative Council, 1916; President, Fifth Punjab Provincial Conference, 1917; nominated fellow of the Punjab University in 1908 and generally interested in education among Muslims; Secretary, Islamia College Managing Committee for nearly fourteen years; Minister for Education, Punjab, 1921-23 and 1924-25; temporary member of the Governor-General's Executive Council, August-November, 1925; Revenue Member, Punjab, 1926-27; substitute delegate for India at the Assembly of the League of Nations, 1927; Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, 1930-35; leader of the Indian Delegation to South Africa, 1931-32; promoted Muslim interests in all spheres and revived the All-India Muslim Conference; reorganized the Unionist Party in the Punjab in preparation for the elections to the Punjab Assembly under 1935 Act; died on 9 July 1936.

MUKUND RAMRAO JAYAKAR. Born on 13 November 1873; educated at Elphinstone School, St. Xavier College and Elphinstone College, Bombay, graduated in 1895, M. A., in 1897; taught in the

Aryan Education High School, 1896; L. L. B., 1902; went to England 1903; called to the Bar, 1905; practised in Bombay; attended the Calcutta (1906) and the Surat (1907) Congress and attempted rapprochement between Extremists and Moderates; Professor of Law at the Government Law School, Bombay, which he resigned in 1912; President Nasik Social Conference, 1917; President Poona District Conference, 1918; President Hindustani Music Conference, 1918; Director, *Bombay Chronicle*; Member of the Congress Sub-committee on Punjab Disturbances, 1919; Vice-President of the Bombay Home Rule League, opposed Gandhi's entry into the League and resigned, 1920; suspended practice, 1921; disapproved civil disobedience, 1922; elected to the Bombay Legislative Council, 1923 where he was the leader of the Swaraj Party till 1925; Member Legislative Assembly of India, 1926-30; Deputy Leader of Nationalist Party in the Assembly, 1927-30; Leader of the Opposition, 1930; Delegate to the Indian Round Table Conference in London of 1930; member of the Federal Structure Committee; mediated between Mahatma Gandhi and Lord Irwin, before the conclusion of Gandhi-Irwin Pact; Judge of the Federal Court of India, 1937-39; Member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, 1939-41 (later made a life member); first Vice-Chancellor of the Poona University, 1948-57; Member, Constituent Assemblyof India, 1946-47; died in March 1959.

MAHOMED ALI JINNAH. Founder of Pakistan; born in Karachi on 20 October 1875 in a Khoja family; went to England to study law, 1892; called to the Bar (Lincoln's Inn). 1896; practised in Bombay, 1897; temporary Presidency Magistrate, Bombay, 1900; entered politics, 1906; represented Bombay Muslims on the Imperial Legislative Council, 1909-19; indifferent to Muslim League in the beginning and avoided Extremists in the Congress; attended Muslim League session in 1912 but his chief work remained in the Congress and the Legislative Council; went to England and helped to organize the London Indian Association, 1913; joined the Muslim League, 1913; Congress delegate to England to lay before the Secretary of State the views of the Indian National Congress on Council of India Bill, 1914; worked for Hindu-Muslim unity and was associated with the Lucknow Pact, 1916; joined the Bombay branch of the Home Rule League and was its President, 1917; resigned from the Imperial Legislative Council in protest against passing of the Rowlatt Act, 1919; left the Congress at the Nagpur session, on adoption of Non-co-operation resolution, 1920; elected unopposed to the Central Legislative Assembly, where he led the Independent Party, 1923; started pleading for adequate Muslim representation in the legislatures, 1924; opposed the "all-white" membership of the Simon Commission, 1928; opposed acceptance of the Nehru Committee Report for ignoring Muslim interests, 1928; attended Round Table Conference, 1930-31; was in England, 1931-34; expounded the "two-nations' theory and was the author of the Pakistan resolution of the Muslim League, 1940; led the movement for the establishment of Pakistan; responsible for Muslim League withdrawal from the acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan; launched direct action to achieve the goal of Pakistan,

1946 ; conducted negotiations with Lord Mountbatten which resulted in the acceptance of Pakistan demand, 1947 ; first Governor-General of Pakistan, 1947 ; died 11 September 1948.

MOHAMED ALI (MAULANA). Born in December 1878; educated at Rampur State School, Bareilly High School, M. A. O. College, Aligarh and Lincoln's College, Oxford ; Chief Educational Adviser, Rampur State, 1902-03 ; became a journalist and started the *Comrade*, an English weekly newspaper, 1911, and *Hamdard* Urdu daily of Delhi, 1913 ; founded the Khaddam-i-Kaaba Society, 1913 ; known for his extremist views on the Khilafat question ; interned under the Defence of India Act at Mehrauli, Lansdowne and Chhindwara, 1915-19 ; confined in Betul (C.P.) Jail, June-December 1919 ; became leader of the Khilafat movement and led the Khilafat deputation to Europe, February-October, 1920 ; joined the Non-co-operation movement and was founder and first Principal of the National Muslim University (Jamia Millia Islamia), Aligarh, 1920; sentenced to two years rigorous imprisonment, 1921 ; President of the Cocanada Congress session, 1923 ; supported special representation for Muslims; opposed the Nehru Report on communal grounds, 1928 ; died in January 1931.

MOTILAL NEHRU. Born on 6 May 1861; educated at Khetri, Kanpur and Muir College, Allahabad ; started legal practice at Kanpur, 1883 ; moved to Allahabad in 1886 and soon became a leading civil lawyer ; visited Europe and refused to undergo purification ceremonies on his return and excommunicated, 1899 ; became leader of the Moti Sabha, later changed to *Satya Sabha*, the society of the emancipated members of the Kashmiri Brahman community; attended the Allahabad Congress, 1888 ; Secretary of the Reception Committee of 1892 Congress session; attended Banaras Congress and supported the Moderates, 1905; presided at the First Provincial Conference of the United Provinces, 1907 ; President U.P. Social Conference, 1909 ; elected to Provincial Legislative Council, U.P., 1910 ; President, Allahabad branch of the Home Rule League, 1917 ; President of the Amritsar Congress, 1919 ; supported Mahatma Gandhi in Non-co-operation movement ; resigned his seat on the U.P. Legislative Council and gave up legal practice, 1920 ; Member of the Congress Working Committee and one of the three General Secretaries of the Congress, 1921 ; arrested and sentenced to six months imprisonment, 1921 ; member of the Congress Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee ; advocated the policy of Council entry and formed the Swaraj Party with C. R. Das after the Gaya Congress ; leader of the Swaraj Party in the Central Assembly after 1923 general elections ; Chairman of the committee set up by the All-Parties Conference for drafting the Swaraj constitution, 1928 ; President Calcutta Congress, 1928 ; joined civil disobedience movement, arrested but released on account of ill-health, 1930 ; died on 6 February 1931.

TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU. Born on 8 December 1875; educated at Agra College, Agra ; Advocate, Allahabad High Court, 1899-1926 ; Member, All India Congress Committee, 1907-17; Member U.P. Legislative Council, 1913-16;

Member, Imperial Legislative Council, 1916-20; President U.P. Provincial Conference, 1914; President U. P. Liberal League, 1918-20; Fellow of the Allahabad University, 1910-20 ; Member, Banaras Hindu University Court, Senate and Syndicate ; Law Member, Viceroy's Executive Council, 1920-23 ; represented India at the Imperial Conference, London, 1923 ; President, All-India Liberal Federation, Poona, 1923 ; Member of the Reforms Enquiry Committee, 1924 ; mediated between Gandhi and Irwin, 1931 ; Member of the Round Table Conferences, 1930-32, and the Parliamentary Committee, 1933; President, U. P. Unemployment Committee (1934-35) and author of a monumental Report on Unemployment ; took leading part in organising a Non-Party Conference for ending Indian political deadlock in 1941 ; edited *Allahabad Law Journal*, 1904-17 ; died 20 January 1949.

V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI. Born on 1822 September 69 at Valangimon, Tanjore District, Madras ; educated at the Native High School, Kumbakonam, matriculated in 1883, graduated in 1887; Teacher's Training College, Madras, 1891 ; started life as a school teacher, was Headmaster of Hindu High School, Madras, 1899-1900 ; founded Madras Teachers' Guild and Triplicane Urban Co-operative Society, 1904; joined the Servants of India Society, 1907 ; Secretary, Madras session of the Indian National Congress, 1908 ; opened the Madras Branch of the Servants of India Society, 1910 ; nominated to the Madras Legislative Council, 1913 ; gave evidence before the Royal Commission on Public Services in India, 1913 ; elected President of the Servants of India Society after Gokhale's death, 1915 ; elected to the Imperial Legislative Council, 1916; founded the *Servant of India*; seceded from the Indian National Congress and helped to found the National Liberal Federation of India, 1918 ; gave evidence before the Joint Select Committee of British Parliament on the Indian Reform Bill, 1919 ; was member of the Committee to draft Rules under the Reform Scheme ; opposed Congress Non-co-operation and boycott of the Montagu Scheme and elected to Council of State, 1920 ; made Member of the Privy Council, 1921 ; Member of Indian Delegation to the League of Nations, Geneva, 1921 ; deputed by the Government of India to tour Australia, New Zealand and Canada to urge on their governments the desirability of removing the disabilities of Indians lawfully domiciled in those countries, 1922 President, National Liberal Federation, 1922; led the non-official delegation to London regarding the status of Indians in Kenya. 1923 ; member of the Liberal deputation to London, 1924 ; resigned membership of the Council of State, 1925 ; member of the First Round Table Conference between India and South Africa, 1926 ; Agent of the Government of India in South Africa, 1927 ; Member, Royal Commission on Indian Labour, 1929 ; attended First Round Table Conference, 1930 and second Round Table Conference 1931 : second Round Table Conference between India and South Africa, 1932 ; Vice-Chancellor Annamalai University, 1935-40 ; died on 17 April 1946.

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